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THE STOMACH  
AND  
ITS DIFFICULTIES.

(i)



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THE STOMACH  
AND  
ITS DIFFICULTIES.

(i)

VITA BREVIS, ARS LONGA,  
OCCASIO PRÆCEPS, EXPERIENTIA FALLAX,  
JUDICIUM DIFFICILE.

HIPPOCR. Aphor. I.

*J. G. Perry*

# THE STOMACH

AND

## ITS DIFFICULTIES.

BY

SIR JAMES EYRE, M.D.,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF LONDON; LATE CONSULTING  
PHYSICIAN TO THE ST. GEORGE'S AND ST. JAMES'S DISPENSARY.

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"In primis valeas bene; nam variae res  
Ut noceant homini, credas, memor illius escæ,  
Quæ, simplex, olim tibi sederit. at simul assis  
Miscueris elixa, simul conchyliâ turdis,  
Dulcia se in bilem vertent, stomachoque tumultum  
Lenta feret pituita."

HORAT. Sat. L. ii. 2, 71-75.

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1869.

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**LIPPINCOTT'S PRESS, PHILADELPHIA.**  
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(iv)

In Affectionate Remembrance  
OF  
JOHN ABERNETHY,  
THE PROFOUND PHILOSOPHER,  
THE HIGHLY-GIFTED INSTRUCTOR,  
THE BELOVED OF HIS PUPILS IN LIFE,  
THE REVERED IN DEATH,  
THE FOLLOWING CURSORY REMARKS  
ON HIS FAVORITE SUBJECT,  
FOUNDED ON HIS ENLIGHTENED PRINCIPLES,  
AND CONFIRMED BY THE RESULTS OF EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE,  
*Are Dutifully Inscribed*  
BY A MEMBER OF HIS CLASS OF  
1812-13.



## PREFACE.

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It is long since I promised to give to the public the result of my observations on the Digestive Organs, the study of which has been always, to me, replete with deep interest; and having at length nearly renounced all nocturnal professional avocations, I am thereby enabled, with undisturbed study and calm reflection, to watch the ever-varying phases presented by that important organ, the stomach;—which, when it duly furnishes its pure functional secretions, is, like fire, invaluable,—as a slave; but otherwise it becomes a dangerous, because too powerful, despot! It is either, like the “vernal airs” that usher in the “gentle spring,” mildly, but munificently, refreshing and revivifying the earth; or else it resembles the rude violence of elemental strife, devastating by its impetuous fury all that impedes its disastrous course. Be it



then still my daily study to minister to "The difficulties of the stomach"—that Pandora's box—the *fons et origo*—the source of so many of our corporeal and some of our mental susceptibilities! Let me not, however, be understood as meaning to herald these practical remarks in deprecation of severe criticism, by unfelt declaration of humility and unfitness for the task I have undertaken. On the contrary, I have come forward to offer in all truthfulness some of the results of a diligent observation and inquiry during a long life, for the consideration of the profession to which I have the honor to belong, totally free from any anxious misgivings as to its reception; for I anticipate a *second* kind and cordial welcome from my brethren,—founding my expectation on the full assurance that they love truth for its own sake, and will be pleased to see, in this performance, not a mere exhibition of the lucubrations of others, dapperly arranged and paraded for display, but of those which have been, in fact, gathered and carefully garnered for *use*—being the fruits of my own gleanings at the bedside or in the consulting-room—following therein, though *haud*

*passibus æquis*, the example of my first surgical instructor, Sir Benjamin Brodie; who, when I expressed my opinion that his lectures were greatly prized by my fellow-pupils even forty years ago, replied, "I have *myself wondered* that, with so little experience as I then had, my lectures *should have been popular* with the students. I believe the explanation is, that although I had not much information to give, what I did give was drawn chiefly from my own written notes of cases, so that I communicated my *own* knowledge, and not that copied from books." It may be said that the *style* of my work is not sufficiently *grave*, and that the introduction of a lively anecdote is hardly defensible, when treating on the serious subject of human disease, and also that the *rules* which are here laid down for the preservation of health are so stringent that it will be impossible to carry them *into practice*. To the first objection I would reply that man's nature must be changed, before he who is daily and hourly "thankful for being (physically) not as some other men are," can not only think, but speak and write from the impulse of his contented, nay, cheerful mind.

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And be it remembered that happily, in medicine, the age of wigs and canes (gold-headed) has long since passed away! And well I wot, if there be not capacity, beyond the ordinary caliber, in the physician, he will soon be distanced in this stirring go-ahead era; and although tricks and traps for the unwary were never more rife and quackery and shameless pretension more successful than in the present generation, such can, we may hope, only prevail for a season; while honesty, plain dealing, truth, and consistency will stand forth triumphant to the last. To those persons who talk of *impossibilities*, I would only say that the sooner the word is expunged from the medical vocabulary the better for the weal of mankind. And I hesitate not to affirm that all which I enjoin may, though not without effort, be attained, more or less, by every one,—and is entirely and unmistakably within the power of *many*. ONE great fact, at least, I have ascertained (which of itself might constitute the reward of a life of labor),—namely, that stomach complaints are, for the most part, curable; that permanent deliverance from misery may be promised, and the

engagement punctiliously fulfilled. Medical men, those of England even, are a class of persons slow to take advice from any but their paid and privileged teachers. This may, with most, be owing to their timidity and conscientious carefulness; but with *some* it may arise from jealous conceit, and repugnance to be taught, even when taking the lesson from mature age and undoubted experience. That this disinclination *to stir*—this tardy reluctance to make even a timely move on their parts—arises from apathy, I will not do my brethren the injustice to imagine. Happily, however, there already exists a daily increasing friendly phalanx, who *do* believe a professional associate, when he declares that he has traveled and labored, *sought and found* for them an inexhaustible *mine*,—and who desires nothing in return but that he may retain their confidence and affectionate regard; which, next to self-approbation, is worth more to him than all the mines of California. Whether this shall be the last time of the author's appearance in print, will mainly depend on the public's reception of the present performance. But if, as on several previous occasions, he should be

again so fortunate as to satisfy the expectations of his medical brethren, and also obtain the approval of those candid critics whose former encouragement to him, as an author, was cherished as the breath of his literary life, he will then have naught left to desire! To all such *fautores existimationis suæ benigni* he tenders his grateful thanks, and desires, for the present, to conclude with addressing them, most cordially, in the words of the Venusine Bard,

VIVITE (*sodales*) VALETEQUE!

LOWER BROOK STREET, January, 1852.

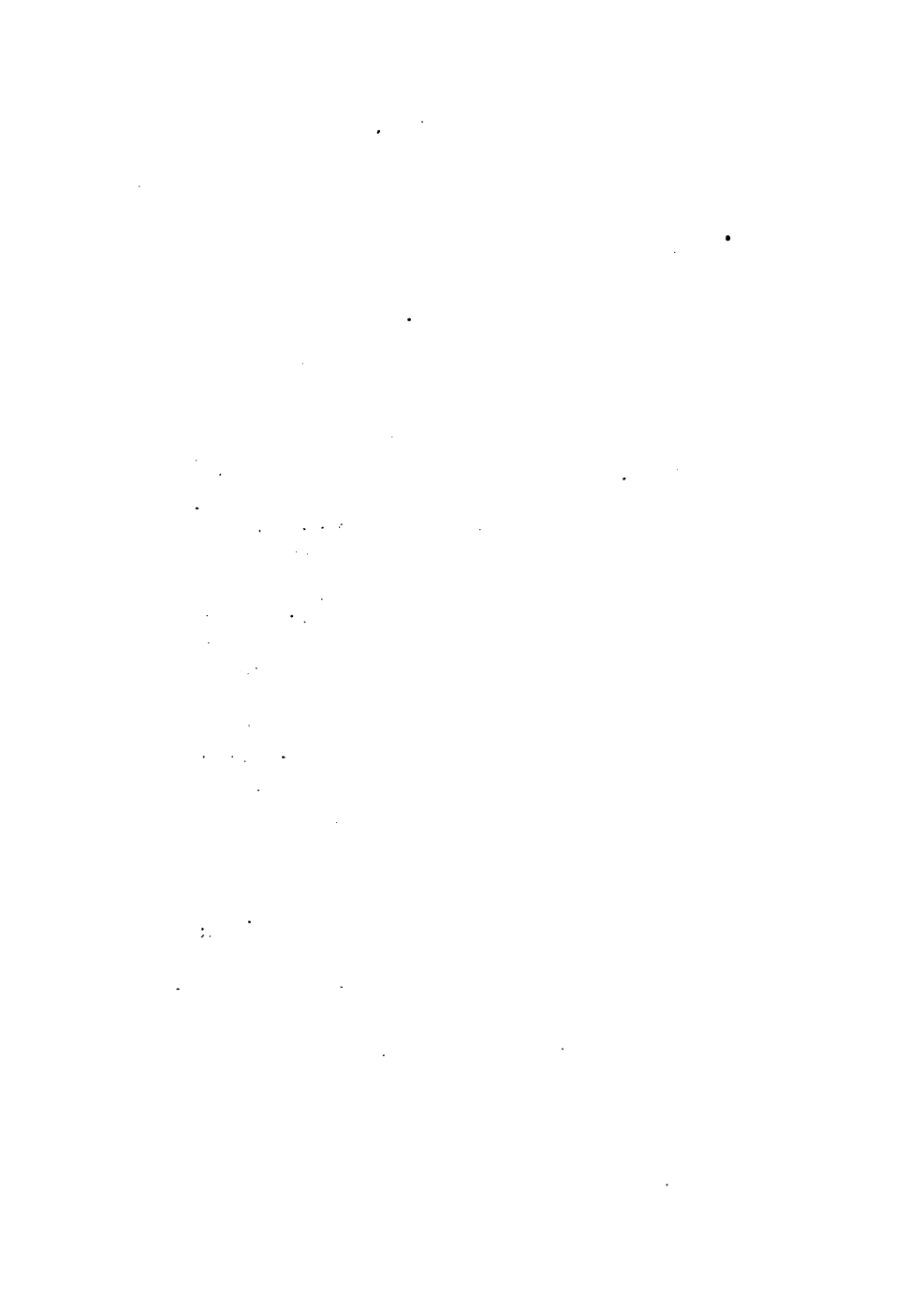
## PREFACE TO THE SIXTH EDITION.

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MESSRS. CHURCHILL having requested me to edit the new edition of this work of my old friend Sir James Eyre, I readily acceded to the wish, out of regard both to the author and the subject. I have always advocated the opinion that the most important part of the science of medicine is to prevent disease; and, believing that to succeed in doing so is to induce the public to learn how best to manage their stomach, I have endeavored still further to fortify the advice of my old friend on this important point. Those who would enjoy good health may do so by attending to the laws of digestion, and by administering to the stomach wisely in regard to food and drink. The best proof that the following pages have advanced and diffused a more extended knowledge on this most important subject, is the fact that a sixth edition of the work is required.

LIONEL JOHN BEALE.

( xiii )



# THE STOMACH

## AND ITS DIFFICULTIES.

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It may be considered by superficial observers that the subject of Dyspepsia, or Indigestion,—according to Dr. Armstrong, a most fruitful source of Consumption,—has been exhausted, and that little if anything more remains to be said, so many books on Stomach Complaints, from which most persons suffer at one time or other, having been written by able men. The opinions of those who may do me the honor to read these remarks will be, I trust, of an approving and consequently encouraging character; and I hope they will agree with me, that it is the almost imperative duty of every physician, whether of the rich or of the poor, to keep a faithful record of his experience, from day to day, and from year to year, especially if it be considerable;—since it is impossible for any one, with however excellent a memory, to recollect, as one of our ancient medical writers has observed, the particulars of more than two or three years of his practice, a very few interesting cases excepted. It would be well if every member of the profession would keep



a *journal* (as I have done during many years) of any practical points which may seem to be worthy of notice, when glancing over the medical contributions of the day, or while engaged in his more studious readings; for he would find, at a time when the anxiety of the medical friend to relieve is only exceeded by the desire of the afflicted patient for relief, how intensely gratifying will be the feeling, when administering the cup of health, to reflect that he has taken it from his *own* repository; which, inspired by a sense of duty, he had been induced to treasure up. This has been, this will be, more or less, the lot of him who has thus hoarded his experience, and husbanded his strength, for the hour of need! He will feel, also, as I have done, the craving desire to add, if possible, something to the constantly accumulating mass of medical *facts*, sincerely wishing to benefit the great family of man, before he goeth "whither he shall not return," to the dark valley, which to all, but certainly to a sexagenarian, cannot be very far distant.

The importance of the stomach in the animal economy can hardly be exaggerated; it was called at one time the seat of the soul, and by Haller was figuratively designated "the conscience of the body," though of all the organs belonging to human nature the most ill used! It shall be the first object of my present occupation, to describe, however briefly (otherwise a link in the chain would be wanting), the structure, situation, and functions of the stomach, although this part of my duty will be to some almost a work of supererogation, these things being so well known, at least to

all medical men. My principal object is to direct attention to not only a careful and truthful arrangement of what is *old*, but a communication of something that will be found to be *new*, in relation to the treatment of the organ in question, both in health and under disease. A "great book" being justly considered a "great evil," the main purpose should be to condense that which must be said to acceptable dimensions, and to round off the angular points which present themselves, while examining inquisitively the vitally important subject of human digestion. The stomach is placed on the left side, or *hypochondrium*; and, as anatomists are fond of comparison, is very like in shape to the Caledonian bagpipe, having its larger end to the left, and its smaller to the right of the body. It varies much in size in different individuals; it is a continuation of the *œsophagus* or gullet, that tube which passes down in front of the spine, and behind the windpipe, and ends at the *duodenum*, or pit of the stomach, as it is commonly called, the commencement of the first or small intestines, into which it transfers its contents. The stomach has three coats, or coverings, the *mucous* or innermost, which begins at the mouth, lining the whole of the alimentary tube between thirty and forty feet in extent, the highway of the body; the second tunic is the *muscular*, which, by the contraction of its fibers, is constantly moving the various matters while under the process of digestion. The third, or outer one, is the *peritoneal covering*, which envelops and protects not only the stomach, but the other important parts which are tributary to,

or connected directly or indirectly with, that organ. Its nerves are *cerebral*, *ganglionic*, and *spinal*. It is plentifully supplied with blood; and hence endued with a high degree of vitality.

Man is an omnivorous animal, as is shown by his teeth and the structure of his digestive apparatus. It is true that many instances have occurred of individuals who have lived to old age without ever tasting meat—the late Sir Richard Phillips, Sheriff of London, Dr. Lamb,\* and others. John Hunter, it is recorded, fed an eagle entirely on vegetable, and a sheep on animal food; and yet life and apparent health were sustained. Rabbits, if kept fasting a long time, will eat meat greedily. The teeth, however, were no doubt intended by our Creator to be our main guide on this point. Animals which are destined to be supported by aliment of a mixed character have teeth adapted to the minute division of flesh; and also such as belong to the vegetable-eating tribes. It would seem best, therefore, to adopt the evident design of our structure, and acquiesce humbly in the course pointed out by nature, and justified by common sense; inasmuch as the food, whether animal or vegetable, or both, requiring much commixture for its due digestion, there are salival manufactories, so to say, established, one on each side of the face and under the jaw, which abundantly liquefy the mass as it passes down the œsophagus into the stomach; that organ being

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\* The doctor died, prematurely, as I must believe, at eighty-three.

duly prepared for its reception, and forming the grand alembic of health and hilarity, the mainstay of bodily comfort, and the happy precursor to mental perception. On the instant that the admixture arrives at its destination, a second fluid is simultaneously secreted from the mucous membrane, which is called gastric (the word juice having been formerly employed), and which is so well adapted to break up and prepare the heterogeneous masses with which it has to deal, that it rarely fails to pass them on in an improved condition, the product for further treatment; but if unusual matters be presented,\* *muscular* power—the special constable—is called upon to eject or transfer the intruder into that tube which ends finally in the *cloaca*—the *omnium gatherum* of all clean and unclean bodily things! This gastric fluid, abundant in quantity and pure in quality, when not secreted from a vitiated source, contains an acid, the *hydrochloric*,—or that which was heretofore known as the *muriatic*,—partly derived from the food, and partly from the blood, and essential to the production of that nascent fluid which is eventually to nourish the system during the wear and tear of our work-a-day lives.

After this commingling of food and gastric fluid, the mass passes through the *pyloric* or lower end of the stomach into the *duodenum*, the first portion of the small intestines, which is comparatively very short, but both long and broad enough to receive the all-important contribution of the liver toward a second process of digestion, in the shape of an alkaline fluid, the

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\* As a hat, for instance.

*bile*, which is destined to neutralize the acid proceeds from the stomach.

The *pancreas*, also an important glandular organ, which occupies a position near to this laboratory, lying across the spine, transmits by a tube to the *duodenum* a copious bland secretion, similar in quality to the saliva, as its contribution to the all-important process in question.\*

The two next portions of the intestinal tube, the small intestines (called *jejunum* and *ileum*), furnished, as has been said, with an inner delicate secreting membrane, and, like the stomach, with one of a muscular texture, pass the prepared fluid on through their long tabulated structure, and are supplied by another description of vessels which permeate the canal; and these marvelously (but *all* is marvelous), by their selective property, absorb from the stream as it flows its most nutrient and valuable portion; they then convey it to a receptacle by the side of the spine, and finally this new purified product is distilled drop by drop into a vein which conducts it to the heart and lungs, that it may, by the action of the oxygen of the atmosphere, be perfected into blood, the grand vital fluid of the body, from which all the various secretions are formed.

This description, condensed to the utmost, is, however tedious, unavoidable in a work which treats on Indigestion; since the normal or legitimate process

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\* Dr. Baillie said that the pancreas was the least liable to disease of any of the internal organs.



must be first detailed in order that the variations therefrom may be presented, regulated, and removed. Brevity, indeed, is *demanded* by the professional reader, who so well knows these functional qualifications; yet even *that* must be "in measure due," since there are others, non-medical persons, who laudably seek to understand some of the wonders of the animal machine, and to comprehend, though necessarily imperfectly, the striking succession of changes which occur in their bodies, where *chance* has no place, and where, as in all things, *design* is the *Alpha and Omega* of the beautiful whole.

To advert to my *object* in the following pages: it is, firstly, to point out how we may best *prevent* indigestion; secondly, to indicate some of the means which will assuredly *remove* it, or at least *alleviate* its annoyances, such evidence being herewith adduced as may satisfy those whose confidence alone one would most wish to possess; and lastly, it is my intention to conclude the subject by recording a few *facts* and opinions thereunto relating, the result of the inquiries of a truth-seeking mind, elicited by a memory naturally good, but infinitely improved as drawn out in practice by constant use.

A dissertation on the qualities of food suitable for each individual would occupy volumes, and I can only, therefore, give a very subordinate share of consideration to this part of the subject. The *sources* of nourishment are infinite, and the *organs* of assimilation, though usually accommodating *à merveille*, are sometimes, as it were inherently, wayward and capricious.

The first part of the digestive process—namely, *mastication*—demands attention at the very threshold of our inquiry, for on its due performance, or by an operation analogous to it, the health of man or woman, and especially of children, depends; and of the last-mentioned a few words must, *in limine*, be said. None but foolish, incapable *nurses* ever give solid animal food to infants not having the child's number of twenty teeth, after which period legitimate eating really begins; and the most watchful care is necessary, on the part of parents and guardians, to see that these said teeth are duly employed, or that the substitute—namely, ample artificial comminution—be insisted upon. How indeed can we expect habitual obedience from a wayward, inexperienced, ignorant offshoot of humanity, acting on strong impulse,\* while those who

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\* In this place let me solemnly caution parents and guardians (having so often seen the direful effects of forcing the minds of children by excessive early pressure) to abstain, and not work the brain of the sensitive infant prematurely, defeating thereby the intention in view. Shakspeare, Walter Scott, Sheridan, Goldsmith, and Dean Swift, are said not to have been clever as boys, and they lived to a good age; whereas Tasso, Pascal, Kirke White, and some others, who all ripened precociously, were urged onward, and died young. That the mother supplies the mental faculties, and the father the corporal, I am quite satisfied: almost every clever man, living or dead, has had an *intellectual FEMALE* parent. Of great men who had clever mothers, I may name, for exemplification, Lord Bacon, Sheridan, Schiller, Sir William Jones, Sir Walter Scott, Napoleon, Curran, Dr. Samuel Parr, and the Kembles.

are ripe in age, endued with sound sense and much resolution, perpetually take those things which they know to be unsuitable, if not unsafe, and who require a keeper much more than the mannikin alluded to? And while on this part of my subject, I must advise that it be made a strict injunction to children to take salt\* with their food, so necessary for digestion, as helping to supply that wholesome acid, the hydrochloric, without which the process *cannot* efficiently be carried on and perfected. Sugar in abundance is an abomination to the stomachs of young people. Water as a beverage, or very light beer, is, in all cases, the fittest for persons under the age of fourteen or fifteen, unless other fluids are medically ordered; also one substantial meal of animal food in the twenty-four hours is amply sufficient. The *lithic*, another acid, but of a hurtful character, is secreted by the digestive organs when either naturally weak, or made so by bad management (stuffing in particular), and is a source of great trouble to those under puberty, by day and *sometimes by night*; and also to adults, who have passed the middle period of life;† and, without

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\* Some silly, misguided persons rail insanely against the use of salt, which has been recommended strongly by physicians in every age. There is a very striking case mentioned by the late Dr. Hugh Ley in his work on *Laryngismus Stridulus*, page 205, where the life of a child was evidently saved by leaving off sugar, and taking salt instead.

† A great change takes place between forty and fifty in the constitutions *both of men and women*, requiring, at that period, a little medical and other care.



great caution, continues to injure and render miserable those whose constitutions are disposed to secrete in abundance this acid. Nor is this the only evil produced by the irritated and outraged organ, since even the oxalic acid is sometimes eliminated; and how destructive to the constitution the absorption of this must be, can easily be imagined. The liver, as is well known, is situated under the ribs, chiefly on the right side of the body: its office is to furnish an alkaline fluid, *the bile*, which is in a manner solicited for commixture in the *duodenum* by the pure, healthy, mild acid of the stomach; but when this becomes rank, and strong,—as it were *overproof*,—and poisonous, then the liver is overtasked, and excited to produce an overflow of bile, and this often not of good quality, and then the evil begins; Pandora's box is opened; impure blood is formed (from heterogeneous, hostile, incongruous elements); in children especially. Hence diarrhœa, eruptions, hydrocephalus, and convulsions arise; but even escaping these, scrofulous affections and calculous disorders, more slow, but more dangerous, because creeping insidiously, enter the system without warning: and though *these* evils may not occur to adults by the mismanagement of themselves, others of a not less dire and refractory character arise—such as miserable, spirit-breaking *dyspepsia*, forbidding the proper enjoyment of a single comfortable meal—gout, gravel, and premature old age. Our allotted time on earth would be easily attainable by man, if he did not follow the blind guidance of his own willful nature; but indolence and self-indulgence are his bane, who might

fully enjoy most of his Creator's gifts, both mentally and corporeally, under defined and reasonable restrictions. But no: suction and cramming have now changed places; drinking is out of fashion, and gluttony is *in*: man rushes on heedlessly to the goal, and compensates himself with his plentiful platter, far more perilous than the heart-cheering, laughter-provoking, temperate cup, and as surely commits self-destruction as the poor coward who accomplishes it by the razor, the river, or the rope! But if he will be persuaded,—though by a stranger, yet a *friend*,—and it be not too late,—he may obtain abundance of aid from one who has been long, very long, gleaning in the field of observation, and who will drop into his ear much useful counsel, and teach him how to remove many of the thorns and brambles which impede his present errant and hazardous course.

But *eating in excess* is the vice of the present day, and so well managed, that even religious persons will not see its sinfulness\*—*sinful*, as absorbing and wasting so much more food than the body requires, and which so many absolutely need; and *unwise*, regarding it in the lowest point of view, as lessening the enjoyments of appetite by inordinate use. Thus these

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\* Is drunkenness a sin and gluttony not? Is it not a sin to make but one meal a day—namely, to eat all day long? Those who refrain entirely from wine and spirits (in perverse opposition to ancient and modern, profane and scriptural authority) generally eat twice as much as other persons, since water alone fails to satisfy the due demands of the stomach.

sensualists dig their graves with their teeth, and surely march thereto by the slow but certain steps of premature decay. But, as our constitutions bear not bold and sudden changes, the snaffle-rein must be added to the bridle of common sense thus recommended, and thus the victory over superfluous feeding may be gradually obtained. Great caution, too, must be employed, especially at the period of convalescence from severe illness, many having been killed by gastronomic errors, not only as to quality, but quantity also, at that critical juncture.

These may seem hard words, but they are advisedly employed; and they are used especially to warn those who are yet able to listen and obey, and not to those who have all their lives been outraging that most long-suffering of all our bodily organs, and who will find it so much more difficult to submit to medical authority than that part of the community who have not as yet recklessly indulged in habitual insubordination.

Nothing can be more difficult than the judicious practice of the medical art, because each case when presented to our notice, as physicians, must be studied in all its individual peculiarities;—so much does the same complaint vary in its aspect in different persons and also in the same patient at various times; and hence the necessity for the first inquiries being minute, studiously careful, particularly made and attended to. And invalids would do well to remember that they are in the presence of their medical director and friend, and that there must be no mental reservation; otherwise the doctor is defrauded of his best reward, and,

what is far worse, the patients cheat themselves. "His best reward!"—what is that? I answer, it is the pleasure of feeling that, as humble instruments merely, our skill has been permitted to prevail; and to see, in such cases, the parent restored to the family, the wife to the husband, the husband to the wife, the child to the parent, the friend to the friend, and thus to see the eye brighten again, beam anew, and overflow with the grateful tear of happiness. It is then that the heart of the faithful physician beats blithely at the joyful consummation mainly resulting from the patience and skill of him, the confessedly undoubted, though secondary cause.\*

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\* Much twaddle has been prattled, and from time to time offensively written, on "the religious principles of medical men." I, for one, indignantly deny that any imputation can be justly made against the profession in the present day on that head. We can only judge of a tree by its fruit. I, who have freely mixed during half a century with my brethren of every grade, from the lowest to the highest, in France and in Italy, in Scotland and in Ireland, and, above all, in dear old England, in town and country, hesitate not to declare that I know no such disinterested philanthropists as medical men. We do not make comparisons, but we claim equal companionship, as Samaritans (as a privilege only, not as a ground for boasting), with the clergy of each and every denomination. We are lavish of our time, our money, and our pity; for "having the poor always with us," we must not, and we do not, as a body, heap up riches for ourselves. We are *their* privileged protectors—at least in sickness—and never refuse to them our advice. Witness the thousands and tens of thousands who are yearly assisted gratuitously by the medical practitioners of this great city, and also by the poor-



Among the real duties of life, one of the most important is to acquire sufficient acquaintance with the action of the stomach to comprehend, in some degree, how much our health and happiness depend on the health of this important organ." In the first place, it is vain to attempt to get rid of any disorder or disease while we continue to indulge in unlimited gratifications to stomach desires; we must when laboring under disease place them under strict regulations. We may even assert that the majority of complaints in their early stages may be cured by strict attention to diet and regimen, even without medicine, at least with very little. In the prevention of disease much may be done by learning even a little about the action of the stomach and other organs of digestion, in that process which commences the conversion of our food into materials for supporting the structure of the body, the health

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law and other medical officers in the provinces, who work without a thought of obtaining what would be called, in any other grade of life, just remuneration! If the conduct of medical practitioners be not universally Christianlike, it has always appeared to me to partake so much of that character that I have never yet been able to see the difference. The transactions of life are so different in *reality*, and when inquired into, from the *aspect* which they bear on a first and uninquiring view; as, for instance, it would seem surprising that that august and learned body, the College of Physicians, should go to *Paris* for a President, and her Majesty's talented first physician to *Holland* for a consultation in the case of a royal valetudinarian; but the probability is that neither of the bodies alluded to could have properly adopted a different mode of proceeding.

and strength of our internal organs, as well as our external ones of locomotion, etc. The process of digestion is to supply the blood with sound materials for supporting the health and strength of the body generally, and a knowledge of the means of accomplishing these important objects may be attained by all who are wise enough to think such knowledge of the greatest importance to their happiness.

The possession of good health can only be realized by the adoption of such rules of diet and regimen as insure a due re-supply of healthy blood to replace that which is daily consumed in our avocations of life. We use up, every hour of our existence, certain amounts of blood, the larger the quantity in proportion to the amount of work we give to our mental and corporeal powers. To renew the quantity of blood daily used up, is the duty of the stomach and the other organs of digestion; these prepare our food and drink for conversion into blood, and the more healthy their action the better is our blood and the more vigorous are our bodily powers. Gout, rheumatism, and various other disorders are often produced by the injudicious supplies given to the stomach, both in quantity and quality. Irregularities in our mode of living generate *lithic* and other acids in the stomach; these pass into the circulation of the blood, and lay the foundation of many disorders which may be brought into action by cold, wet, or other causes of disease. We too often charge cold and wet with being the cause of attacks of disease, but these attacks would not have occurred unless the blood had been infected with particles of de-

praved matter resulting from overindulgence, or other irregularity of the organs of digestion, first and foremost, from our injudicious supplies to the stomach.

No one would argue against the opinion that good health was the greatest blessing of life, although we must admit that there are some who consider that the constant superintendence of the stomach and digestive organs renders life miserable. But in point of fact this vigilance ceases to be necessary from the habits we soon acquire of always taking proper food and at proper times, so that we cease to suffer those discomforts which so frequently occurred to us before we learnt the means of keeping the stomach, etc. in proper working order. All admit the value of good health; and when by some experience they find how much this may be secured by moderate attention to certain rules in relation to the quantity and quality of their food, they cease to think such attention insufficiently rewarded by the acquisition of an amount of health such as they had not been favored with for years.

Perhaps we might lay it down as a rule, that the majority of men eat twice as much as is really required for the support of health and strength; but in most cases the error is to be referred to ignorance of the laws of health, rather than the mere pleasure of overindulgence. It is a common mistake among all classes that the more we eat the stronger we shall be, and nothing is more fully believed than that our vigor depends on the quantity as well as the quality of our food. Training for feats of strength and endurance contradicts this opinion; those who undertake the

management of men who are being prepared for any muscular exertion, walking, boxing, etc., are only allowed certain quantities of food and drink, together with well-regulated exercise in the open air. A moderate, well-regulated supply of food and drink will establish a better condition of health and strength than that full amount which many indulge in under the idea that it is essential to their welfare. So much is this the case that we all know persons who have lived to a great age and who have been the most moderate eaters. No doubt as life advances we really require less food. I could enumerate several healthy people I have known who, always moderate, after the age of seventy, never required daily more than fourteen or sixteen ounces of solid food, two-thirds of which was bread. To have had a stomach easily upset has been a blessing to many, who have thus found the necessity of moderation; a long course of such mode of living has been so obviously beneficial, in the production of so high a scale of sound health, that this very moderation has been one element of great longevity.

When we talk of the evils resulting from indigestion and other stomach derangements, our conclusions are deduced from the fact that it is the stomach and its co-operatives, the liver and other organs of digestion, by which the blood is prepared, the nutritive products of digestion being carried into the circulation, to replace those parts of the circulating fluid which have been used up in the nutrition of our various organs, the exercise we take, etc. We obtain our strength and capability of muscular exercise from the nutritive matter



absorbed into the blood, after the stomach and other organs of digestion have prepared those elements of our strength and health. So long as we can manage to supply the best materials for the reproduction of such nutritive elements as are required to maintain the quantity and quality of our circulating fluid, so long we may preserve our health, and the very supply of the best materials for conversion into blood is the real source of sound bodily vigor.

There are two special provisions which characterize the action of the stomach and the other organs of digestion: the one is to supply heat-making principles, and the other what may be called building materials, which maintain the various organs in their vigor. Our daily existence wears away a certain portion of our organic structure, and this should be daily renewed by the organic particles obtained from the food we eat, to replace those which are used up by muscular action and the vital powers of all our organs. Our daily exertions wear away some portions of our frame, and our daily food is converted by digestion into living materials for its renovation. This fact alone is sufficient to impress every thinking mind of the absolute necessity to guard against any supplies of food or drink that can in any way be injurious to the healthy structure of our body. If the stomach does not do its duty well, our frame will not be kept in its normal condition; we shall not maintain that vigor which is essential to the establishment of sound health, and all our organs being more or less injured by improper food and imperfect nourishment, we lose our strength, and

some disease or other is established. But before there has been time for disease to be seriously confirmed, it is wise to consult our medical adviser, by giving a clear detail, not only of our present symptoms of disorder, but of all the causes, irregularity of diet, etc., which may have produced the complaint we are suffering from.

And here may I interpose a word of advice to the physician, who should withdraw his services when he perceives the slightest want of confidence on the part of his patients; for there should be as entire a feeling of trustfulness on the one side as the desire to relieve on the other; and it is certainly the more dignified course for him, whose authority ought to be absolute, to make the first move.

Patients, particularly those who suffer from stomach complaints, must be told that though gorging from the cradle to the grave is the chief cause of dyspepsia, yet neglect and inattention to nature's requirements\* are also very frequent causes. There are persons who have much misery to contend with, who nurse their troubles, who will not see that this life is a training-school, *and who will scarcely forgive even their MAKER for afflicting them*; or who will not behold the beautiful, the cheering resplendent blue sky so nearly touching the dark cloud of their distress! these often shun their meals, or for solids substitute inefficient *liquid* nourishment, and thus add bodily infirmity

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\* Though, as the French say, "*l'appétit vient en mangeant*;" the same as to thirst, etc.

to mental inquietude. But such persons will in vain consult medical men until their grief shall have somewhat subsided.\* But there is another and a large class of individuals, who are free indeed from mental anxiety, but who will not inquire, and who forbear to *use* that common sense with which they are gifted; these will take no sustenance whatever, not even a cup of milk or of coffee, on first rising from bed in the morning, before taking a long walk. Others, again, who are sane on all other points, will take an early breakfast, dine at a very late hour, eating nothing in the interim. To such I would say, and especially if destined to close mental application, take a biscuit, a crust of bread, or some other light article of diet, at least, or you will, when age advances, assuredly suffer from the stomach having been kept empty so many hours every day, and this perhaps during many years. The liver invariably undergoes pain and general derangement of its functions, from mental affliction and depression, which sometimes originate, and always aggravate, dyspeptic disorders. But the patient who has no real trouble may be duly directed as to daily habits, the selection of food, as to quality and proper quantity; and, having received earnest injunctions on the subject, will find a reward in the cure of his indigestion, which will be more or less perfect, according to the extent of his obedience.

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\* That talented physician, the late Dr. Baillie, always avoided prescribing for those who were in deep affliction, full well knowing that his medicine at that time would be entirely inefficacious.

As a general rule, it may be laid down that every man ought to have seven hours' sleep in the twenty-four, but more especially those who have much bodily labor or mental occupation; a woman requires eight hours, and a child still more. I quite agree with Dr. Baillie that so long as sufficient sleep be obtained during the night, it matters not *which* of the five, six or seven hours are selected for the purpose; there is no harm in *talking* about "beauty sleep" before twelve. Good sleepers are good workers, but light sleepers, as they are called, may always be permitted to doze during half an hour or so after their great meal, as also those who have weak digestion; but more on this subject anon. That vexatious tendency to sleepiness so tormenting to active-minded persons, which especially occurs in men, for the first time, between forty and fifty, can only be obviated by temperance in eating and drinking, refraining from malt liquor (except bitter beer), using much walking exercise, and *not allowing the excretions\* to remain long in the body.* An in-

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\* The bowels and the bladder, *as receiving the most hurtful excretions of our bodies*, ought not only to be emptied when they crave relief, but a wise man waits not for this; and I would implore all of either sex to remember through life that they ought to *anticipate*, whenever they may be able, the call to evacuate the intestinal canal, and especially to get rid of the *last-named* poisonous product; for this, of all others, is the most dangerous to our health to retain, even when composed of its legitimate qualities; and how much more ruinous must its retention be when loaded with albumen, or with one or other of the various acids which so often oppress and harass its containing receptacle! It will be well, at any rate, for us

valid should never be out of bed after ten o'clock at any period of the year; he should never go to rest with cold feet; and should rise as early as he comfortably can, from the middle of May till September or October, particularly in a large city, where the consumers of oxygen are shut up in their bedrooms for ten or twelve hours, breathing, over and over again, the same vitiated and pestilential atmosphere! A ventilator here is absolutely necessary, or an inch of open window, in the summer months at least, for those who will not rise early, but who have abundance of courage for all other things. Daily walking exercise, in cases of dyspepsia, must be insisted on as a *sine quâ non*. I have myself often removed a beloved friend, by gentle violence, from the indulgence of a bed, with the happiest results. Every one, whether afflicted with indigestion or not, should walk, and that *every day*, in as pure an air as he can find, till he begins to experience a sense of fatigue.\* A long room or passage may be

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to be able to satisfy ourselves, which we can do by the following test of Dr. Bence Jones—namely, that the excretion under consideration is natural, in order that, *if not*, medical assistance should be sought. "The renal excretion, when of a healthy character," the doctor says, "never gives a precipitate, after having been boiled, that is not soluble in a drop or two of nitric acid." Those who chiefly live on vegetable diet make much water; and those who will eat inordinately of meat should indulge largely in weak potations, to diminish, as much as may be, the substantiality of their overnutritious diet.

\* Liebig remarks, "one great objection to *excessive* exercise is, that it causes us to take too much food."



used as a substitute, however sorry, in inclement weather, which will rarely for a whole day together prove obstructive to a health-seeking individual of common energy of character. Horse-exercise is next in value ; and where both these can be obtained, medical services will be at a discount. Carriages change the air and the scene, and, so far, are not to be despised, especially by those who have the inclination, but not the power, to accomplish all that they would ; but driving is not deserving of the name of exercise.

*The want of a covered well-ventilated place, but free from draughts, for delicate invalids to resort to in winter, is a serious evil in this otherwise greatly improving metropolis.*

As the number of times in the day that we should eat is of great importance, and the most fitting hours for it is not much less, that subject shall come next in order. And first, in regard to the number of times. This must depend, as also the quantity and quality of the aliment, on the labor that is about to be performed ; for all who study health ought diligently to employ both body and mind, whether they live by their own labor or by that of their deceased friends. The following rule I would write in letters of gold : *According to our mental and bodily employment, so should we eat.* But there is a large number of persons in the world who do nothing, who never did do anything, and who never will exert their faculties, even for the promotion of health, unless frightened at the thought of death. Such are persons who will not believe that they are

*stewards\** of their time and property and *act* upon that belief; accordingly, they become mere locusts and cumberers of the earth. Yet these eat and drink to the full as much as those who know and feel hourly that by the steady use of all their faculties they have the *mens sana in corpore sano*, which offers the best guarantee for a long and healthy life.

And here it occurs to me to give a serious caution to those of either sex who are small in stature, constantly to remember not to take much food, or, in other words, so much as those of larger corporeal dimensions. These individuals, however, whom I would thus restrict at table, may be comforted by the full assurance that, if long life be desired by them, they will have a much better prospect of attaining it than a tall person would have. The stomach may *receive*, but the body must *entertain* it. The same rule of abstemiousness applies to those who have had the misfortune to lose a limb. These especially should consider—but they do not—that there is the same quantity of blood formed as heretofore, but *not* the same *space* for its circulation; hence such individuals are usually plethoric, gross, overnourished,—and thus in an unsafe state, as always traveling on the brink of a precipice! And if they should have lost a *lower* limb, they will not only be less inclined, but less fit, for taking salutary exercise. In inflammatory disorders the judicious physi-

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\* The late Rev. Robert Montgomery once, while preaching a sermon in order to raise a fund whereby to build a church, startled some of his congregation by saying to them, in conclusion, "Put the money on the plate; *it is not yours!*"

cian orders the abstraction of blood according to the bulky or the diminutive stature of his (adult) patient. The same precaution is observed by the legitimate practitioners of medicine on corresponding occasions, in bearing in mind the *ages* of sick children. Neglect of bleeding has killed many, but rash, violent, opposite treatment has destroyed more, at every stage of life, either by a *coup de main*,—as in attacks of palsy, for instance, or of epilepsy.\* Those again who scarcely ever perceptibly perspire are the most difficult to treat when they are ill: such are found, I think, chiefly among the gentler sex;† and therefore, the great safety-valve of the skin being all-but closed, *they should eat little*. Lastly, young persons, on account of growth, require much food, as well as much sleep; and the question of *amount* need not be considered here, as exhaustion will seek reparation, and the young, having the key to the hearts of their parents, will always eat and drink and sleep as much as they require.

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\* While my epileptic patients are under treatment by the oxide of silver (the very best medicine we possess for epilepsy), I desire each of them to wear, just below the tie of the cravat, a card with these words written thereon, *Don't bleed me*; as a protection for them, while insensible, against any active-minded Sangrado who might be summoned at the time of seizure, and otherwise possibly commit irreparable mischief.

† To such I have found warm bathing and the flesh-brush of great use, so grievously neglected in England; and, if they wear flannel, as every one in this changeable climate should (next to the skin, if they can bear it), it must not, *in their case*, be taken off at night, even in the summer; the stomach and the skin sympathizing so much with each other.



The *time of day* for eating is of more importance than is generally supposed. Of this I entertain no doubt at all,—that the earlier in the day the great meal of the whole can by possibility be taken, the better. The stomach, and all the other important organs which are concerned in digestion, are most vigorous after sleep, and therefore most able then to encounter and master the repast *par excellence* of the day; but the artificial state of society in which we live absolutely mocks the sanative advice of the physician, and even a man's own endeavors to help himself; for how is it possible for those who are anxiously engaged in important pursuits to possess clear heads (medical persons not excepted), whose minds and bodies are wearing away by incessant overexertion always by day, and often, in addition, by night? Yet much, very much, may still be done by those who are disposed to hearken to reason; for, although the breakfast cannot and ought not to change places with dinner, a two-o'clock *luncheon*, particularly in the case of ladies, may be substituted; this it is always quite easy to do, and, indeed, many of my fair friends are in the habit of *dining* in reality at two, making believe only at seven or eight. Thus those who will listen to the voice of experience, and will accept friendly counsel, will go as far as they can in the right way; and in proportion to their conformity will they reap that *practical benefit* which, having fairly earned, they may reasonably expect to enjoy. I advise, then, that the breakfast, as a meal, be not eaten till the appetite for the day shall have arrived; and those who do not feel hungry (though

most lively, active-minded persons do so on rising) should, however, if able to walk, first take a cup of milk, coffee, or cocoa, and then promenade for an hour, at this the best portion of the day. Those who have the great privilege of being able to dine at two, or not later than three, will, at six or seven in the evening, seek that refreshing beverage "which cheers, but not inebriates," after which a very slight repast—suppers being abolished—will suffice (a biscuit, or some almost nominal *placebo*, to amuse the stomach till "balmy sleep" shall come). And this is the code of the health-seeking, sensible man; for he will treat his stomach exactly as he would a pet animal (not a two-legged one), which ever makes a grateful return for judicious kindness. The periods for taking food are of less importance than the quantity and quality of it. Whenever we find our stomach out of condition, when our want of appetite is a hint from nature that we have done something wrong, having eaten in excess, or partaken of articles which former experience has told us disagree, and are unsuited to our digestive organs, we should at once, by abstinence on the one hand, and medicine on the other, adopt such measures as we know to be required. Very serious disease will often be prevented by timely attention to early symptoms.

*Diet* is a large subject, and demands the lion's share of our task; embracing the important question as to what substances, whether solid or fluid, we should supply to that insatiable applicant, *the mouth*, which seems never to be tired of saying, "Give;" but be it

my province, and that of my fellows, to say, *Withhold*; for to give, as is ordinarily given, is to destroy; but to furnish half rations at times is to insure the perfect zest for those creature-comforts which are so abundantly supplied in such vast variety, for our legitimate present use, as well as the prolongation of our existence, in which many have undoubtedly much enjoyment after seventy, or even eighty, years of age.

Although other and far different maladies arise from the prandial pranks of the present day, they are not so soon developed as the effects of post-prandial debaucheries of not very distant times, now, thank Heaven, gone by, let us hope, forever!—times when free agency for a soberly-disposed man was almost out of the question; when vinous potations were indulged in, in quick succession, from glasses without pedestals, often with locked doors (that a certain fixed quantity might be consumed); till, at length, those two- and even three-bottle men would, one by one, fall under the table, to be swept away with the rest of the refuse, by the domestics of these habitual sots. The toasts and the conversation after dinner among these so-called gentlemen of that day are frightful to reflect upon. Early escape from such pollution could only by decision and firmness be accomplished. But how often have I heard with grief of a young man, endued with all that delightful purity of mind which we often see in early life, being first introduced, as a manly privilege, to the society of these drunken debauchees, and then, ere long, the trail of the serpent has passed over *him*! And there still are too many young men who, as yet,

having had no contact with vice, appear to be hardly of this world—yet gradually and insensibly by evil communication give up one virtue after another, till they become at length lost in the common herd—left only to *look wistfully back* on the state of paradisiacal purity they once possessed, but which, alas ! only at rare and transient intervals can they ever experience more ! But now, happily, an intoxicated man is rarely to be met with : *a drunken gentleman, never.*

In consequence of the present cautious shyness as to the bottle, gout and gravel—both of which arise from the same cause—are comparatively of rare occurrence among men ; while women—perhaps from not drinking to excess—are almost exempt from these two disorders, and which men really *need* not have. Another compensation, too, the gentle sex enjoy for their numerous miseries, mental and bodily, is the being less liable than men to consumption. But, if men *will be sick*, the miserably painful maladies of stone and gravel seem to absorb, like Aaron's rod, all others, and enable their possessors, who have duly graduated in brandy and port, to hobble out painfully pre-eminent as "Grand Compounders" of their year. And here let me say, in regard to port wine, that where my patients have had the resolution to renounce it as a *habit*, and drank good full-bodied claret, with Scotch or Irish whisky-and-water occasionally, their old enemy has invariably left them. Sherry agrees with the majority of persons better than Madeira, and assimilates better with that seducing tempter—champagne ; which, never having been seen formerly, ex-

cepting at the tables of the rich and the great, is now found everywhere. The dietetic physician cannot say much in its commendation. A single glass even would cause the cheek of the Emperor Napoleon to become red;\* but, then, though a great sufferer in other respects, his stomach was *his* weakest organ. An "outside barbarian," a remnant of the olden time, will be seen occasionally to venture upon a jorum of John Barleycorn, or even a glass of port, with his cheese,—an article of diet which, being only eatable with the afore-named liquids, is rapidly losing caste. Ale and porter, with the middle and higher classes, are now rarely introduced at table, their use with wine, excepting with sherry, being incompatible. Malt liquor is now prescribed by physicians, but in certain suitable cases only. The lower grades of society prescribe it for themselves empirically, and without consideration. Breakfast, in this country, consists of tea and coffee, with eggs, meat, and sometimes fish: in Scotland, of all these, and, in addition, an abundance of marmalade and other preserves. In France and Italy, the cup of coffee† (the best in the world, inas-

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\* Whenever the cheeks become rouged after dinner, it is a sure sign of feebleness of the digestive powers, and is a hint for the employment of reparative means.

† The way that I was taught to make coffee for myself during a twelvemonth's residence for purposes of study (in Paris) was as follows:—Use it fresh roasted, immediately after being ground; allow half an ounce of the berry to each person; and, instead of water, pour over the mass of coffee a boiling decoction of the coffee of the preceding day.

much as, in the former country especially, the coffee is not grudged, as in England) is taken immediately on rising, and *le déjeuner à la fourchette*, in other words the *first* dinner, at eleven o'clock. Monsieur, after the large stock which at this time he lays in, can very well wait till five, when he eats as much as he can; and this usually concludes (as he generally retires to rest early, that he may rise in good time) his gastro-nomic feats of the day; so that, in fact, he takes but two meals in the twenty-four hours, whereas those persons in England who are unwisely advised to take "little and often," make but one, for they carry out the idea faithfully, and eat all the day long. The stomach does not know what to do with such people. In ordinary statutable cases, that wonderful receptacle\* always disposes of the previous meal before it engages with the next; but those who make feeding their hobby, and who are, therefore, fit for little else, ungratefully give their best bodily benefactor no quarter at all; which, as well as the too long abstinence which has

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\* Who has not heard of the experimental philosopher, who fed a rabbit first on oats, and, after a certain time, gave the animal a meal of parsley, and, suffering a proper interval to elapse, killed it? The stomach had nearly digested the oats, but had not attacked the parsley. The same experimenter fed another rabbit, reversing the order of these two articles of food, and, destroying the animal, as in the preceding case, found that the digestive organs had been employed with the parsley (the first meal), but the oats were as yet unacted upon; their turn had not arrived! Would that we would deal as justly by the stomach as that abused friend does by us!

been already touched upon, will be equally resented, nay, avenged, later in life. Persons do not, though they should, well consider what, as a matter of fact, is the character of their constitution and of their habits. A man or woman who is plethoric, and makes blood fast, should not eat meat for breakfast;\* an egg, or two, would be the extent of my allowance to them; or, perhaps, should there be mental or bodily employment in prospect, some dried fish. Corpulent persons, again, who have already taken too much sustenance, in whom the accumulation of years is hoarded up in the shape of fat, may well perform quarantine, and rest a little from their toil.† Great corpulence should be looked upon as disease, and means should be taken not only to reduce that which is in excess, but also to prevent its recurrence by moderation in diet, and especially of such things as are known to fatten. At the

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\* Persons who are full of blood, and are above the average size, secrete much lithic acid. Fat in them, too, is stored up, and nourishes them when ill, and when food cannot be taken. Haller mentions a man who weighed eight hundred and twenty-five pounds. Daniel Lambert and Bright could only boast each of a load of seven or eight hundred. It is a wise plan, and adopted by many who are corpulent and make blood fast, and who resort frequently to feasts, to dine on fish *alone* when at home, with a very sparing allowance of butter on the subsequent day to the feast. As an inducement to perform this penance, let them be assured *that obesity, especially in men, tends much to the abridgment of life.*

† They should also make it a rule to take a warm bath twice or thrice every week, *for them* a needful act of purification.



same time, when corpulence is excessive it will be right to adopt means not only to prevent any increase, but also to diminish the existing excess. Sudden abstinence or great change in diet should be avoided, but a gradual diminution of such articles as are known to fatten must be attended to, and the effect carefully watched, so that the health may not suffer.

It is a great mistake to suppose that stout people do not eat as much as those who are thin; their puffing and panting, one would think, might give them warning, as also their profuse perspirations, particularly by night. Let such avoid the sugar-basin and the butter-boat as much as they have hitherto sought them, and eschew oily food and malt liquor, unless it be of the pale and bitter kind; but when individuals say—as I once heard a corpulent gentleman declare—that “he would drink ale if it cost him his life,” what can medical authority avail with a madman of this kind? Although patients who have a weak digestion do not get rid of aqueous fluids well, I have yet found that black tea for breakfast, as well as in the evening (never hot, but strong, and in moderate quantity), is the best beverage for all. Toasted bread is the most wholesome solid for either the first or last meal of the day, either with rye or without, as it may agree. Bakers’ bread is objected to, on account of its containing alum.\*

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\* Dr. Ager (who lectured with Dr. Hooper, my early teacher, in Cork Street, in 1811) was accustomed to tell us a story relating to a friend of his, a physician, who, suspecting that his baker took the liberty of putting alum into his bread, had some powdered, cut a slice from a loaf, sprinkled the



The recent researches of the *Lancet* have shown that this is the fact; but how few can have bread baked at home! Hot cakes, rolls, muffins, new bread, etc. must never be introduced into weak stomachs. Bacon need not be refused: it rarely disagrees, its constituent parts are so different from those of other meats. When sea-bathing is desirable, *after breakfast* is the best time for it; but with those whose circulation is feeble, the water should be tepid at first, that the shock\* may not be too great. I do not recommend the shower-bath to persons who have weak nerves, for the same reason; sponging is better for them. This also is the fittest period of the day for eating fruit, which, when thoroughly ripe, especially raspberries, strawberries, and gooseberries (not currants), suit marvelously well most stomachs, as do some other products of the garden or hothouse; but this kind of additional indulgence must be attained by the patient's own careful experience. No luncheon is required, excepting the dinner be late; but all *meats* should be avoided at luncheon, unless sanctioned by medical authority.

And now, sitting down, at length, to discuss the main repast of the day, I would address, and, if possible, *influence*, those who wish to be directed, and who, I really believe, from the care which I have seen them exercise, desire not to be guilty of prandial ex-

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alum upon it, and then sent for the offender and showed it to him, who, taken by surprise, said, "Why, good dear me, sir, there is enough there for a whole batch!"

\* This is more applicable to men, for the gentle certainly bear cold much better than the rougher sex.

cess. Such will accept as a guide one who has well considered the subject in all its bearings, and who has not, he trusts, burdened his book with irrelevant or gratuitous observations.

*Quantity* of food is of much more serious importance than *quality*; for although every man is *not* a fool or a physician at forty, he will have generally found out, at that period of his life, what articles of food may be taken by him, and those which may not; for there are few—who live in towns, at least—who can eat of everything that is to be found in the culinary list. These will, therefore, take care, nay, be somewhat cautious, as to *quality*, but will probably indemnify themselves in the other respect; it being perfectly true what Mr. Abernethy was accustomed to say, that when eating four times as much as we ought, a quarter *supported* us, and the remainder we had to keep at our own risk! and this is now the less to be justified because, in these halcyon days, in more respects than one there is perfect liberty conceded, both in eating and drinking. It may be remembered by some of my readers how pressing to take more was commonly practiced formerly, not only on those that needed it, but on those who needed it not—on myself,\* for ex-

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\* I once escaped at table the well-meant persecutions of the kind-hearted wife of a medical friend, from whom, ever and anon, came the inquiry of what I would take next. This had been so often repeated, that I had begun to look round, fearing that my character, *as a teacher by example*, might suffer, and replied that, "If she pleased, I would take *breath*." It

ample. Yet let it be an axiom never to be forgotten, that the stomach must have, at least once a day, a certain portion of animal food, which, if not properly digested, assistance must be sought to ascertain the cause and enable it so to do. The taking of soup or broth (*potage*) is by no means of the same value as meat; an ounce of the latter is more valuable than a pint of liquid nourishment. Fluids, as we have said, are absorbed almost as soon as taken, but solids require the action of the muscular tunic, or coat of the stomach; and every one knows that by use all muscular fiber becomes stronger—witness the legs of pedestrians, and the boy-blacksmith's arm. If the inherent properties of our nature be not kept up by healthful habit, they languish, and, languishing, die. Soups are *not forbidden*, but are not to supersede the solid substantial nutriment. Man's *character* is much influenced by the aliment which sustains him.\* Of fish, the *white*

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was saucy and ungrateful, but it was good-naturedly received and understood.

\* The effect of different modes of life on the human frame and human character is strikingly instanced in the cases of the hunting Indians of the prairies, and those of the piscatory tribes on the sea-coast: the former, continually on horse-back scouring the plains, gaining their food by hardy exercise, and subsisting chiefly on flesh, are tall, sinewy, well formed, and have a bold and fierce deportment. The latter, lounging about the river-banks, or curved up in their canoes, are generally low in stature, ill shaped, with crooked legs, thick ankles, and broad flat feet. They are inferior also in muscular power and activity, and in *game* qualities. (*Washington Irving*.) Again, good teeth are seldom to be seen among tribes west of the Rocky Mountains, who live chiefly on fish.

kind is the best, and, if boiled, agrees with most invalids; those who can digest salmon and fried fish may encounter all other dishes without fear.

There was great wisdom in the law of our ancestors, that on two days of the week we should live upon fish alone without any meat; and it is a mistake to suppose, as many do, that there is but little nourishment in fish. Of course, it is not so substantial as what we call animal food; but, by giving the stomach less work to do twice every week, we keep our digestive organs in such good condition that they are better able to abstract all the nourishing qualities of the food we eat. It must be clear to all who will give their thoughts to the subject, that if we can sustain the action of the stomach by occasionally giving it less work to do, we can with greater success derive from its action a larger amount of support to the body, by the better quality of the nutriment it provides for the blood.

Our next question is concerning *meat*, which, as the French say, is the *point d'appui*, not after but before all. Beef\* takes the lead for first-rate digestion, beginning with the fillet, or the inside of the sirloin. Venison, game, and mutton are far more acceptable to the invalid than chicken, etc. Pork is not desirable, unless when long fasting is anticipated.†

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\* Roasted meat is more nutritious than boiled.

† The veal in Paris and on the continent being the only kind of meat which in general is superior to that of this country, I was induced to make an inquiry of a London butcher (selecting a young one), "if the atrocity of bleeding poor calves to death, *gradually*, is still practiced in this metro-

Veal is always at the bottom of the list; but not even mutton, any more than any other food, can be taken continuously, without the occasional intervention of some other viand, of which I had a striking proof very recently. A young man was fed by his employer on mutton five days in seven; he was ill in consequence, and could get no relief till a change was made. A striking instance of idiosyncrasy occurred at the Hôtel Dieu, in Paris: a woman was uniformly made ill when under the age of fourteen by eating crabs. A great change in her constitution took place (prematurely) at thirty-two; and again the inability to eat this kind of shell-fish returned. Another patient (a young lady) was always sick after eating animal food. Dr. Stark, of Edinburgh, lost his life by subsisting partially, if not entirely, on cheese. Dr. Prout records the case of a patient who could not take mutton in any way without being ill, though introduced into the stomach surreptitiously in pills.\* I know an

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polis?" He said, "Yes, by many butchers, but not by all." (The custom is more prevalent in the country.) On being asked how the torture was inflicted (which that admirable act of Mr. Humanity Martin has not reached), he said, "We bleed 'em every day for about four days, take a little out of them the first day, and more every day afterward, when on the last of all they are made to faint, and then, some hours after this, killed." And we, who know of this plan of whitening veal, eat it so whitened, and call ourselves Christians!

\* This patient should have lived in Rome, where they have no mutton at all during several months in the year; and on my inquiring the cause, was told that it was then *out of season*.

instance of a gentleman who cannot eat a single strawberry with impunity; another whose head would be frightfully swollen whenever he was imprudent enough, being well aware of his infirmity, to eat the smallest portion of hare; a third who will certainly have an attack of gout a few hours after eating fish. I have a patient who has during the last nine months been relaxed in her bowels whenever she has taken a cup of black tea; another when she drinks a glass of cold water, as she does every morning fasting, is similarly affected. And, while on this subject, I may mention a fact to show that green tea, though so agreeable, may not be so harmless as it is supposed to be by some. A medical man of my acquaintance can drink it made strong, and in almost any quantity, unless in a morning after he has been out of bed all night professionally; and then, on taking it, his hands always shake violently, as if he had palsy. These peculiarities prove stumbling-blocks (both in regard to food and medicine) to the course of the physician. Meat being so much more easily digested than vegetables, is another reason why the stomach should be accustomed to its moderate use, even in preference to other diet. In addition to the practical experience of us all, that of Dr. Beaumont, the American surgeon, must always occupy a place in a professed work on Indigestion, who, in the case of his young patient Alexis, who had been wounded in the side, and an aperture, or window, being left two and a half inches in diameter, all the arcana of digestion were exposed to the prying eyes of the doctor even for years, so that the

order in which the food passed the pylorus (which we know means janitor or door-keeper) was recorded, and by the curious may be seen in print. Suffice it to say that rice, trout, venison, eggs, etc. took the lead, while pork, salted meat, veal, etc. were always "stopping the way."

If valetudinarians would confine themselves, while under medical care, to one kind of meat on each day (ringing the changes occasionally), with wholesome stale bread, taking brandy-and-water, or sherry-and-water, as beverage therewith, how greatly would their cure and their ability to indulge in other things be expedited! but they must clamor for unwholesome puddings and vegetables, and even (to them) poisonous pastry.\* Of some of these two former, a selection can always be made; but one of the greatest annoyances which medical men meet with is the cuckoo-cry from the friends (?), not the patient, of "What may we give him to eat, doctor?" not knowing, and therefore not considering, that, where hundreds have died from starvation, millions have perished from stuffing.

Rice, vermicelli, tapioca, sago, and prepared barley† puddings may be allowed to dyspeptics. Oysters are very nutritious and easy of digestion, but they should be stewed. The best vegetables are mealy potatoes *roasted*, young peas, asparagus, sea-kale, spinach, broccoli, cauliflower, and onions, which last are highly nu-

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\* What a blessing a cook would be—always the most dangerous person in the house—who could not make pies and tarts!

† Excellent; and to be had at all the seed-shops, with directions for its use.



trititious. When a salad can be digested,—which the stomach ever delights in, on account of the acid,—the cure may be said to have been effected. *Sufficient bread is not eaten by the English at dinner:* we may take a lesson from our French neighbors in this respect, as we may a warning against their habit of mixing so much water with their *vin ordinaire*, thereby diluting the gastric fluid, and rendering it less able to subdue the mass of aliment with which twice daily they overload their stomachs and weaken their power. Fewer bad effects, however, arise than might be expected, from their being so much an out-of-door nation; for it is impossible to state too often, or rate too highly, the value of abundance of pure air in promoting digestion.

For one case of *dyspepsia* occurring in the country, there are twenty in London,—a fact which only those who have lived much in both localities can well account for. Who ever hears of this miserable malady while traveling in their holidays,—while viewing beautiful scenery, scaling mountains, and when every muscle of the body is performing the office for which it was originally created? An extract from a most interesting book (the best) on California, which has just been published by the Rev. Walter Colton, of Philadelphia, well exemplifies our subject. He says, "The Californians eat meat, and that beef, generally three times a day,—at breakfast, dinner, not at tea, and again at supper. A pig is quite a rarity; and as for chickens, they are reserved for the sick. The constant\* exercise

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\* Gentle exercise assists digestion; if violent, it retards it.



of the people of this country, on horseback, gives them the digestion of the ostrich." In speaking of the management of children, a caution has been already given, that, especially till they have effective teeth, their food should be comminuted for them. But what shall we say of our transatlantic American brother, who, eating animal food three or four times daily, positively *bolts* it,\* and as notoriously is grievously afflicted with indigestion? It is the curse of that country, and the more lamentable because self-imposed. But patients are not docile, generally, when able to leave the house, and are not *watched*. Those, however, who have once experienced the horrors incident to indigestion—the pain of the stomach after a meal, the headache, the lowness of spirits, and all the other miseries arising therefrom—will gladly live as has been indicated, and will consent to follow some other rules which have yet to be laid down. They may then anticipate, from the consciousness of having vanquished an enemy, an enduring, and even an enjoyable, state of existence. But, before proceeding further, I would in this place implore those of my medical friends who are teachable, and will hearken to the words of experience, not to treat lightly, as if unreal, the sufferings of their hypochondriacal patients. Their miseries are distressing and real *to them*, and are greatly alleviated by commiseration and sympathy combined with hygienic and other

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\* On my admonishing a patient on one occasion (who winced under it) for his supposed habit of eating too fast, and telling him that *bolting* the food was a *bar* to digestion, he said, "You speak *ironically*, doctor."

curative means; but to him who has once been afflicted himself, this advice will be superfluous, like those who, being one degree removed from poverty, are ever seen most promptly to bestow relief, because they themselves practically know where the pressure is most grievous. The same rule, too, applies to *insane* persons, the best mode of treating whom—next to isolating them from all their present associations—being to affect, at least, to enter into their megrims and prejudices, and thereby obtain their confidence, which insures half the victory over their malady.

It is easy to say and to feel that no sorrows are really deserving of the name, excepting those which arise from loss of character, loss of health, or loss of friends; but there are in this Babylon those who worship no other God than Plutus, to whom filthy lucre is everything, and all things else nothing;\* whose hearts are in their banker's check-book. These—especially if they shall have neglected or abused their digestive organs—will, on a wrong turn of the scale, become at once prostrate, though all the blessings of this world, to a highly-regulated mind, are still attainable by them in all perfection. They claim, too, our pity and our aid. Our *advice* they must have,—not hygienic alone, for to that they are by right entitled; for the physician

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\* One of these devotees to mammon once received a lesson from a humble follower, who did not seem to pay to him, the possessor of the purse, sufficient homage, and said, "Do you know, sir, that I am worth a hundred thousand pounds?" "Yes," said the irritated but not broken-spirited respondent, "I do; and I know *that it is all you are worth.*"

who acts on the golden rule of "doing to others as he would they should do unto him," has *other* means and appliances at hand of a more elevated character, far more potent than the pill or the potion. The kind and encouraging word is ever ready from a commiserating and feeling heart. Occasionally we meet with persons whose appetites, though good, are very soon satisfied. In them, perhaps, the stomach may be itself small, our several organs\* varying so much naturally in different individuals; some there are with whom Madeira agrees better than sherry, in which case it must be allowed; others, again, who have all their lives fared generously, appear to be unable to leave off port. It would be better that such persons should be *restricted*—if they be docile—rather than forbidden; *for it is a dangerous thing rudely to break off the habits of perhaps half a life.*

Water, or barley-water, acidulated a little with lemon-juice and flavored with the peel, is the best beverage at dinner. Ice I never allow at dessert to valetudinarians, for the stomach when weak is for the time paralyzed, as it were, by the frozen liquid; reaction does not take place readily with them, and digestion, for which warmth is needed, is thus partially or wholly impeded. A small tumbler of *warm* weak brandy-and-

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\* Dr. Beattie has told us that Lord Nelson had one of the smallest hearts ever known; and I myself knew an instance of a distinguished lady, one of great notoriety, whose liver, not unhealthy, weighed five pounds, the usual weight of that organ, in a man, being between three and four.

water or old whisky-and-water is allowable instead.\* Some can take a cup of coffee after their principal meal with advantage; and it is the only time when I should be inclined to permit the use of it to one who is really an invalid. Let those who love to indulge in lengthened post-prandial potations remember the observation of that experienced physician, the late Dr. Babington, namely, "that a pint of wine daily was hard drinking." After a late dinner, anything of a solid kind is rarely required. I am acquainted with an excellent cheerful old Scotch lady, who has abundance of common sense, and is nearer eighty than seventy, who has never taken anything, during many years, in the place of tea and supper, but a glass of cold water every evening, and is in perfect health. If ice must be taken, the latter part of the day is the best time for its enjoyment. But, although the intestinal tube is the grand *cloaca* for the trash which, either twice or twenty times a day, we turn into our stomach, the skin and the kidneys constantly come to the rescue. Hence the necessity of wearing flannel next to the body by all persons, and also of taking abundance of tea, or some other diluent, to keep the renal functions in action. Many of the directions of medical authorities are irksome to follow by a headstrong man,—as disagreeable as the potions

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\* But the best promoter of digestion is a contented mind; this is the *spirit* that is required to help on the great meal, exciting the joyous joke and all the hearty amiable feelings. Those who are wealthy should keep a jester for after-dinner use, as formerly: he would be well worth his keep, and his salary too, if he were a clever fool!

which we inflict upon him. And this may account for that which, if not ingratitude, is so like it that the difference is not perceptible, which he so generally shows after he has, through medical agency, been restored to health. Hence the favor which the *homœopath* obtains: he who, not having succeeded in his career of legitimate medicine, takes up the Liliputian system as a *pisaller*. He gives no disgusting draughts; he never bleeds in inflammatory ailments, without which death must inevitably ensue; he kills no one; he only stands by and suffers the disease to do it, which Mr. Abernethy was accustomed to vow HE never would. I myself have been repeatedly called in by a physician, now no more, of no small note in the small-dose department of medicine, to various patients, to his own family, and even to himself; but a *consultation* with him was, on my part, never thought of. I gave him credit for seeking information when he could not see his way to a knowledge of the nature of the disease, and thus to forget himself and his system in his desire to do his duty to his patient. My reply, on being asked by this gentleman why I did not become a homœopathist, was, that I could not afford to throw away the experience of forty years and begin again *de novo*. But there are some who, it is said, will treat their sick by *either method*. Now, as *both* systems cannot be right, a designation for such a practitioner one should not be long in finding in Johnson's or any other dictionary. Allopathic, or legitimate, medicine is become altogether far different to what it was a very short time ago. Much less physic is now prescribed

than heretofore by physicians, diet and management being more considered than it used to be; and the general practitioner is allowed to charge a moderate sum for his visits, so that he is not driven to look for compensation for his services by the justly offensive method of huckstering in a daily cargo of *drugs*.\* That able practitioner, Dr. Armstrong, said that he could judge of a man's abilities by the simplicity of his prescriptions; for as the science of medicine improves,—and what magnificent strides has it not made in the last half-century!—he who sees his way will not multiply† his curative means. I once saw a formula for a mixture, by a late distinguished physician, with thirteen incongruous articles in it.‡

A lady who was very ill, on being asked why she did not seek relief from homœopathy,§ said “that she

\* The rebellion against this practice, however, laid the foundation, as I believe, for the ridiculous quackery of homœopathy.

† I have often taken my *honorarium* when I have contented myself with laying down rules for diet, etc., and not written a prescription at all; and the patient, a sensible person, has been well pleased thereat.

‡ Like a soldier going into action armed with every known weapon, instead of the musket and bayonet, the old well-accustomed settlers of strife!

§ I look back with much satisfaction upon an instance where (being medical director, that is, physician, for there was no other examiner, during eight years, at an insurance office) I refused the life of a nobleman of high rank, *because* his medical man was a homœopathist, and my brother directors concurred with me unanimously.



could not wait." It is an overwhelming fact, that of all the physicians of this great metropolis, men second to none in the world for their judgment or for their honesty,—men quite independent of their profession in their worldly circumstances,—not one medical man of note has yet thought fit to entertain and adopt homœopathy. But to return from this long digression: pure air, abundance of oxygen, by day and by night, is absolutely necessary for good digestion; but those three thieves—the candle, the lamp, and the fire—rob us of it during half the year; ventilators, however, one of the blessings of the present age, will compensate much for these thefts. Variety, too, in food must be sought in all allowable measure, man, as we have said, being an omnivorous animal. The more *various* the description of aliment that the stomach *can* be induced to tolerate, the better; and as that organ, when healthy, *enjoys* vegetable acids, the citric and acetic, especially the latter, the patient may *train* it by degrees, as convalescence advances, to return to the moderate use of acescent drinks. Again, though to live one day as another is in the main most desirable, yet an occasional outbreak, always keeping within statutable limits, is recommended, as has been before said, by both ancient and modern authority. This I consider to be the legitimate reading of the *toujours perdrix* story of the licentious monarch of France and his spiritual director, on a totally different subject. The reason why women\*

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\* I knew a lady most intimately, who sunk a sum of money on her life at eighty, at an insurance office. She enjoyed,

lived so much longer than men, as Insurance Offices show, by allowing the latter more interest on money sunk, is on account of their temperance, and their not eating and drinking like the rougher sex, and also from their greater freedom from turbulent excitement, and from their in-door habits in inclement weather. Sufficient importance, as it seems to me, is not attached to the living one day as another, especially as to dining at the same hour, going to rest, etc. We are all creatures of habit, natural or acquired; and the power of *living long*—by secondary causes—seems to be very much within the grasp of mankind in general. Of one fact I am quite certain,—and am anxious to give it in the shape of advice to elderly persons,—namely, that by living very temperately—nay, at times abstemiously—and by never, on any pretense, frequenting feasts, they will prolong their lives, should they wish to do so, for years. The greatest man of our age, who ennobled his nobility by the dignified consistency of his character, owed his good health, next to his belonging to an exceedingly long-lived family, to his universally known temperance in eating and drinking, and also by his early rising, thus adding virtue to virtue,—thus crowning a long and glorious public career by setting

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during nearly fourteen years, eighteen and a half per cent.; and, on expressing her satisfaction at her good fortune, was told that had she been of the other sex she would have had twenty-two per cent. In the last census it was recorded that there were 111 men in England, Scotland, and Ireland who had lived from 100 to 119 years, while of aged women there were 208.



an example in private life to ill-judging *boys and girls* (in mind) of sixty and seventy, and upwards! Who can have perused the preceding paragraph without seeing the exceeding desirableness of early rising—that secret of secrets—*la crème de la crème* of our subject—in thus seizing larger snatches of life (for what is sleep but mimic death?)—not to say that we insure almost a certain prolongation of our existence when the sand of others shall have run out! But, in enjoining the cultivation of this inestimable habit, it is right and fitting to be *just*. All are not alike in these wakeful moods, any more than in any other. The power to leave the nocturnal retreat with ease, is partly a gift; but the mind, be it but masculine, and the body not absolutely sickly, can be in a great degree disciplined to the task, but the earlier in life the better, so that there may be fixed upon the act the force of *habit*. There are, however, some with whom the desire for sleep seems to be almost a morbid affection, and who, if awakened in the night suddenly, are totally bewildered, have no presence of mind, and appear to be intoxicated; and if this state arise not from overfeeding, such persons must be of those who probably *require* eight hours' sleep in the twenty-four,—a third of their existence! Sleep must be sought, like food, in corresponding degree to the amount of wear and tear; and nature, in this respect, will assert her rights. Six hours' rest, as a general rule, to an idle person, is sufficient—seven, to one who has fair employment.

I am acquainted with a sexagenarian who rises uniformly at five (in London) as long as it is twilight at

that hour; after this, the whole of the remainder of the year, at six. He takes an hour more only when on the previous night, being much in society, he cannot retire before twelve. This gentleman is very rarely unoccupied, mentally or bodily; lives in all respects as here directed, and is rude in health; but this to one who is contented to exist and not to live, who has the outside frame, but not the spirit, of man—the husk without the kernel—would be to die daily. Any efforts may be made by the steady exercise of the will, *de die in diem*. The plodders who rise early will beat the flashy members of the community. This was the opinion of Lord Eldon,\* and has been, and is, that of many other thinking men, living and dead. But though more disorders arise, as has been said, from eating than from drinking, still they do not destroy so quickly as those which arise from daily tipping up to the verge of intoxication, to a point which habitual indulgence renders it most difficult to avoid. At length the resolution (good at first) is sapped, and disorganization of the delicate mucous membrane of the stomach takes place, and then decay of the liver, especially if spirits shall have been the poison imbibed. In this

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\* Lord Eldon asked a medical friend of mine how many sons he had. The reply was, "Two—one very sharp and quick, the other slow, but sure." "What do you mean to make of them?" "I purpose making a lawyer of the sharp one, and a doctor of the other." "Do no such thing," rejoined his lordship; "make the clever one the doctor, the other the lawyer. *I was never anything but a plodder.*"

case, *delirium tremens*,\* or the drunkard's madness, presents itself; in which, as all medical men know, if sleep be not procured, a certain and often most tragical death is the result.† In such cases, though by the aid of powerful medicine a state of somnolency is induced, an ultimate recovery very rarely occurs. I have never known but one confirmed male drunkard who, by management and gradual steps, retired victoriously with his face to the enemy. I never knew an instance of a woman's leaving off really drunken habits when once thoroughly established. What a warning, then, should this be to those who, in morals, and, above all,

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\* I attended a lady of rank many years ago, who, though possessed of the purest and most delicate feelings, had imperceptibly become a slave to the glass. I found her one day raving mad, *delirium tremens* (not common with women) having presented itself. Sleep, without assistance, was quite out of the question; and remembering my old teacher's axiom, namely, not to let the disease kill, and knowing the cause, I gave her a large dose of hydrochloride of morphia every hour, anxiously watching its effects, as none but medical men can understand; *ten hours* had elapsed before the state of unconsciousness occurred. I allowed her to sleep ten hours, and then had her awakened, gave her some nourishment, and permitted her to sleep again, when she at length arose of her own accord, perfectly sane in mind, and so remained for several months, very grateful, as those of her sex always are, for the benefit that she had received while unconscious of her precarious and distressing condition.

† A very dear friend of mine committed suicide some twelve years ago, when afflicted by this dreadful, though generally relievable, malady. I have a patient who has had five or six attacks, and he is now well.

in religious conduct, are, no doubt, so superior to the rougher sex, though it must be allowed they are not so much exposed to temptation! I knew a man who was wearing out his mind and body by intense excitement, who would take a tumbler of brandy at once, and, not seldom, send a second after it; but he died at forty-eight, and there was no inquest held. This poor fellow once lived most correctly, guided by high principle, but at length gave way to the tempter. If *such* persons break down, how can we wonder at the intemperate habits of those who, not internally feeling that they are stewards of that time of which they will have to give an account, tipple on from day to day, and finally yield up their useless lives victims to solitary sensual abasement,—the hopeless finality of driveling drunken men? Excess in eating is rarely seen, for any length of time, combined with the reckless desire for liquor; but the two vices will occasionally run in couples for a season, till the desire for food is no longer felt by the outraged stomach, and then the “beginning of the end” is soon set up,—the period of nausea, repulsion, and disgust. But it is marvelous how much fluid of a vinous, or even spirituous, nature can not only be taken, but is really needed, in making inordinate bodily exertion, as in climbing mountains, etc., or when the exhausted body is enfeebled by low or adynamic fever,—where in the cases of habitually sober men, ay, and sober women too, the brandy which they consume comes to be reckoned by glasses and the wine by bottles, without which—such is then the craving of the constitution for support—death would inevitably

occur, but by the bold administration of which at the critical juncture, as all experienced practitioners know, multitudes of invaluable lives have been saved. If the liver be disordered or diseased, no kind of food can pass into the system to become his life, which his blood is, without this organ furnishing its large carbonaceous\* complement of alkaline fluid; so that I am inclined to attach more importance to the liver than even the stomach. We have great power over its ailments, however,—mercury in some mild form having specific influence, as much as opium and chloroform† have on the nervous system, as rhubarb is said to have on the duodenum, aloes on the rectum, and as much as ergot of rye and *oxide of silver* certainly possess

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\* Eighty per cent.

† It is impossible to mention chloroform without being deeply impressed with its immense value as one of the greatest discoveries of this marvelous age; great in a point of view which has not been noticed, as I am aware, for it not only arrests pain, one of nature's most formidable evils, but it also tends to *equalize talent*. A surgeon's judgment was often nullified, when about to perform an important operation, by his nervousness and overanxiety: through which many who would have been, from their anatomical knowledge, first-rate operators, have broken down, owing to an excessive desire to do their work well, but who were inordinately distressed by the cries of the patient, happily now no longer heard. Overanxiety to do at least as well as other men, and no blue sky then to be seen, was the real reason why I myself abandoned the practice of surgery in 1831, and, unwilling to rust out in a comparatively constricted sphere of action, went to school again, and obtained, after three years' additional study, a qualification fitted for any locality whatsoever.

*over the uterus.* The unmistakable signs of acute hepatitis, unremitting pain in the right hypochondriac region, often extending to the shoulder, increased by inspiration and by pressure, must be first met by general and local bleeding, which, in such cases, will speedily relieve. But in the slow or chronic form, a more cautious abstraction of blood is demanded according to the age and strength of the patient, and then mercury, either as a purgative or as an alterative, on alternate nights, or administered so as to affect the mouth, must be our sheet-anchor. But general observations only can be made on this section of our subject. This, however, I believe: that from the great proportion of recoveries, under judicious treatment, in those who return invalided from India, absolute *disease* of the *liver* is not so common a complaint as it was once supposed to be, and that, like its neighbor the *stomach*, its disorders are generally curable. When really disorganized (of which emaciation is one of the diagnostic signs, more than in gastric ailments), there is cause indeed for alarm. I am one of those in whom early impressions are indelibly imprinted on the mind; and I cannot, therefore, forget how much importance Mr. Abernethy was wont to attach to the color\* of the motions, which is also my own invariable guide; although my late esteemed friend, Dr. James Johnson, mentions *one* instance where they were healthy-look-

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\* He was so comically diacritical, that he even had colored slips of turmeric-looking paper on his study-table, to assist his patients in their reports as to the appearance of their alvine evacuations.

ing, and yet the liver was found to be totally worn out by disease. Mr. Tytler, also, in the "Calcutta Transactions," and other trustworthy writers, have made the same remark as to the uncertainty of this sign. Their being almost scalding hot in their passage from the body is a sure indication of the acrimony of the bile.

How much, too, as is the case with the stomach, is the liver affected by emotions of the mind! How surely have some persons a pain in the right side on the occurrence of mental distress! Should the motions be light in color, we must discipline the organ in question by the careful administration of the gentle gray powder, or the equally mild blue pill, in small doses up to the chloride, or even the bichloride itself. *But no wise person will venture to take mineral medicines without their effects being regulated by medical care.* Nothing then, let it be remembered, damages the liver so much as the daily imbibition of spirituous potations\* beyond a cautious extent. The evil results of this habit do not appear till some trouble comes, and then the mine explodes. It is my opinion that disease of the heart is not more prevalent than formerly, though nothing is so likely to induce it as excess of eating; and irregularity in this respect does induce intermission of the pulse, which occurs in stomach complaints, arising not from the real damage which the heart has sustained, but is merely a functional disturb-

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\* Stimulants in excess hinder digestion, as the blood is thereby diverted to the head.



ance of that organ from the influx of impure blood. This is very often an inroad of gout, and will be easily removed by colchicum, etc. When the bile is unable to neutralize the impure acid of indigestion, the mass passes on into the bowels, causing griping, tormina, flatulence, etc., in the first instance, and secondly, as has been said, foul blood, etc. *Persons, however, need not have the gout if they will obey in all things their medical adviser.* But then a gouty man must, while suffering his torture, have a kind and tender nurse; and if he should have neglected at the proper time to have provided himself with a wife, a companion in health, and a sure refuge in sickness, how grievously does remorse tear him when he finds himself with a hireling substitute of the *Gamp* breed for a guardian angel! Pseudo-selfishness prevents men often from marrying; they *will have* certain enjoyments (such at least to them), and distrust Providence,—and so do not wed, which any man may do; for he cannot fail to know that the sexes are born in nearly equal proportions; and, having prudently selected his bride, and obtained her consent to enter into partnership, a small stock of love will suffice to begin with; but this will grow into strong mutual affection, as I have often seen,—those cases always excepted where a wife, mistaking her *rôle* in life, and forgetting her marriage vow, madly mars her happiness by striving to be *master*; or where tyrant man puts ugly thorns and briers in the path of a gentle mate, of her who, though often smitten by stern severity, yet *at the one kind word* flies back, like the dove of the deluge, bearing the ever-ver-

dant olive-branch of hope, of faith, and of joy ! But to proceed. Pulmonic complaints being thoroughly understood by the physician of the present day, changes of action and aberration of structure are soon detected. Heart diseases, we often hear, are greatly more prevalent than formerly ; but those who make this remark overlook one fact,—namely, the rapid increase of our population. Knowledge, too, is now so universal, and the veil with which medical gravity has so long covered itself is so often lifted up by prying hands, that it behooves all the followers of Galen and Hippocrates to obtain an insight into the important discoveries of modern times relating to the heart and lungs, and which medical men are now *expected* to understand ; otherwise, as Mr. Abernethy observed, when imploring his pupils (young and old) to learn thoroughly the anatomy of the eye, non-professional persons studying optics as part and parcel of a liberal education, should they find their doctor ignorant on a point upon which they could judge, would give him credit for nothing else, though he might really have an intimate knowledge of his profession in other respects. I agree with Dr. James Johnson in thinking that far more disease of the heart originates from the liver than from the stomach.

*The kidneys perform a much more important part in the animal economy than is generally imagined. They are employed, from the cradle to the grave, in removing poison from our bodies. The researches of Dr. Bright, the late Dr. Prout, Dr. Bence Jones, and other eminent men, have now effectually cleared our*

course, while formerly we were laboriously groping for aid in the dark,—studying, as well as we could, the various phases of renal disorder and disease. The lithic-acid deposit (gravel, in fact) which most commonly excites our attention, appearing in excess, as has been already observed, before fourteen, and after forty,—the gormandizing periods of life, the intervening portion is engrossed by other pursuits,—children ought to be controlled in their eating, as should middle-aged and old men, whose stomachs are the masters *of them*. The stuffing and bolting common at those periods of life are most injurious. If gravel be the only result, abundance of sand will come away; and if not, it will settle into a calculus, and this, when large, will necessarily require an operation of a cutting nature for its removal from the bladder, the horrors of which I have often witnessed (both in England and France), in the cases even of infants and up to octogenarians, before the introduction of chloroform, that blessing above all price! Diet and medicine will usually check the formation of gravel. When, however, a calculus *has* formed, there is no remedy but lithotritry, when it is of a moderate size, or lithotomy if large. Red sand is induced by too generous living; the white, by the reverse. Much pain is caused by it in micturition, but great relief is obtainable by the aid of the physician. It is not, however, from starving or stuffing merely that calculi come. He who would take a large and comprehensive view of the subject cannot generalize in this manner. No one knows better than myself how remarkably free the inhabitants of Herefordshire are

from stone and gravel. Many have thought, while searching for a cause for the comparative immunity of that county from the scourge of Norfolk and Suffolk, and some other parts of the country, that it was to be attributed to the drinking of cider and perry; but it is quite impossible that such should be the case, as in some years they have scarcely any, or "a hit," as it is there called. Malic acid is then scarce, and beer is the ordinary beverage, as elsewhere; and this has been the case during several consecutive years. My opinion is, that the purity or peculiarity of the water is the main cause of the almost entire exemption of these Silurians from calculous complaints. The following extract from a letter written by Mr. Waudby, the house-surgeon of the Herefordshire Infirmary, to myself, dated August 30, 1851, bears strikingly on our subject: "My predecessor, Mr. Tully, does not remember a case of stone during the long period of his residence in the hospital.\* I have only seen two during the many years† of my official career. One of the patients was not even suspected to have had stone during life; the other, a child, had a lithic-acid calculus, which was removed by Mr. Cam. Stone cases, therefore, are exceedingly rare in this county." During my own residence in Hereford as a surgeon, from 1813 to 1831, I never saw a case of stone, and heard of but one, which was that of a physician, formerly M.P. for our county (father of the talented author of *The Diary of an Invalid*); but I have had patients who, having

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\* Thirty-seven years!

† Elected June 9, 1842.



been afflicted with gravel previously to their residence among us, in a short time passed no more lithic-acid or other calculi; so that, although indigestion is undoubtedly the main cause of these formations, and their frightful consequences, that cause alone is not sufficient to *originate* the evil, any more than in other complaints; and the same may be said of remedies tending to its relief. Specifics are indeed rarely successful; but medical power is great; and he who ignorantly despises it, and doubts the wonders that it works, may just as reasonably dispute the life-preserving qualities of meat and drink, as says the great Sydenham, "*Ars medica, si revera ars fuerit, et non solum nomine tenus, maximum est donorum omnium; quæ hanc vitam respiciunt tantoque omnibus, præferendum, quanto ipsa vita iis, quibus in illa gaudemus, præcellit.*" It is an art which is only to be acquired by patient perseverance and indomitable industry, by not allowing one's own experience and opinions to be disparaged, yet gladly receiving instruction from any quarter which may strengthen us in our endeavors to mitigate the miseries of man. And then how gratifying to us is it to be able to promise a cure, and, having so promised, to perform it! Those who are martyrs to indigestion do not, as may well be imagined, all present the same symptoms. Some suffer only after eating animal food, others at every meal; some bring up a tasteless fluid, several times a day have pain in the stomach, and a sensation of heat in that organ;\*

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\* Water-brash (pyrosis), or more descriptively, in Devonshire, "the water-pang."

occasionally the fluid is slightly acid—this is denominated heartburn, and is easily curable. Another form is where that which rises into the mouth is so intensely acid as to “set the teeth on edge” (so to say), in which case the constant pain, especially as there is headache in addition, renders life a burden ; but a glass of cold water will often remove this distressing evil of intense acidity, and should always, in extreme suffering, be had recourse to. A confined state of the bowels is found in almost every case of indigestion. Some persons experience eructation\* with scarcely any pain; others, again, have pain, but without headache; while a third class struggle with all the annoyances which have been enumerated—with, in addition, great sensitiveness on pressing the pit of the stomach. There will, too, be more or less of lowness of spirits, according to the strength of mind possessed by the patient, and the ability to endure—in which the softer sex so much excel creation’s lords! so much so, that I have frequently said to the latter, when deserving such commendation, “that if he had been a *woman* he could not have shown more fortitude!” The fact is, man has active, and woman passive courage; and how admirably, how heroically, she meets sickness in herself and others, none can tell so well as those who, like myself, in early life especially, have witnessed hundreds of times the surpassing, the marvelous patience of the not, in this respect, feebler sex!† Lowness of

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\* An individual who is really healthy neither eructates nor expectorates.

† Well may the male member of the Jewish religion thank

spirits is sometimes morbid, and assumes the character of hypochondriasis, as we call it, in which case the patient is truly to be pitied; and really, when we are angry with persons for being waspish and irritable, the sensitive stomach is probably the cause, and great allowance should be made for them. Not only day by day, but night by night, their enemy pursues them: they generally have horrible dreams; and, if they should have undisturbed sleep, the morning brings no blessing to them, so that their lives are really a hell upon earth! If they, however, have not indulged to excess in wine or spirits, they will assuredly get relief from all their miseries; but should they have gone as far as they could in the daily indulgence of tipping, without being absolutely intoxicated, they must do much in obedience to their physician, and in habitual self-denial, or else they will fail to obtain aid from medical skill.

Neither sex is exempt from this terrible affliction, but men, from living more unrestrainedly, suffer most. Our main point is to study the peculiarity of each constitution; every one having one or more weak points, the successful search after which having been accomplished, all afterward will become easy; but this diversity must necessarily call for proportionably different modes of treatment. For instance, indigestion may

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God in his daily prayer, as he does, that he is not a woman. But what is the humble submissive theme of her, his spouse! She resignedly bends the knee, and says, "I thank thee, O Almighty Father, in that Thou hast made me as it seemed best to Thy good pleasure."



be caused by improper food,—that is to say, unfit for that particular patient's habits; and, on that account, even a little of it would be too much; or he may have been in the habit of fasting too long,\* or have eaten too frequently; or the air which he breathes may be unsuitable; or a woman may suckle a child when she ought not to do so,—a fruitful cause of consumption!†

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\* Who can doubt that Lord Byron seriously injured his health from his great dread of corpulency? His physician, Dr. Polidori, has told us that he would abstain from food for days together, and then, to appease his hunger, would take a wafer and a glass of brandy.

† I have seen many young mothers become consumptive from sucking beyond the time suitable for their constitutions. My rule always is, when I am satisfied that weaning is necessary, and the patient inclined to be rebellious, to refuse to prescribe, and thus starve them out. While on the subject of phthisis, I may say that long experience has fully convinced me of its being communicable from one to another: I have seen husbands follow wives, and wives husbands, who were, apparently, quite well previously; brothers, brothers; sisters, sisters; particularly if they have slept in the same bed together; so that under pretense—not to alarm the invalid—of too much heat being thus created, I make it a point of duty, *invariably*, to separate the sound from the sick, knowing that otherwise death will unite them indissolubly. Mr. Roskilly, the eminent English surgeon of Naples, whom I saw in consultation in that city in September, 1851, expressed his opinion to be the same as my own on this question, and added that the Italians were so satisfied of it that they even burned the bedclothes and garments of the dead. In Rome they put all the consumptive hospital patients into one ward, through fear of contagion. The same opinion, as to the communicableness of consumption, equally prevails in France. One

Again, either sex may be overworked, mentally or bodily; or may have some great trouble, causing them either to neglect food altogether, or inducing indigestion of that which they do take; or, lastly, the appetite may be too keen, and restraint of it not considered necessary. Hence all the dangers arising from fullness of blood at a period when the stomach and its tributary organs have been damaged by overuse; and thus disease, real disease, is established, which cannot with safety be disregarded. Assuming, then, that there is no organic disease—for I write only on *curable* indigestion—the first point to be insisted on is a daily evacuation of the bowels; which can always be accom-

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cannot think upon this scourge of our country without being thankful for the discovery of the value of cod-liver oil, than which nothing in my remembrance has been so useful in arresting, at least, and often for a long period, too, the most fatal malady with which the inhabitants of Great Britain have to contend. It is a remarkable fact, that in Russia and the East Indies, having the two extremes of temperature, consumption is very uncommon; and in the former country extreme longevity is rather the rule than the exception. The reason why young women are so unwilling to wean their children is, from a reasonable fear of having a family too fast. But too long suckling is far more injurious than the not supporting their offspring in the usual manner, which some really cannot do. While alluding to pregnancy, I may also state, as my positive opinion, founded upon much experience, that it is not at all an uncommon occurrence for the term of gestation in woman to extend beyond the customary assigned period of nine months. In quadrupeds it is unquestionably uncertain; there is abundance of evidence to prove this.

plished; the means at our command, dietetic and medicinal, being abundant; *and from this dictum no appeal whatever can be allowed.* The best form for habitual daily use is a mild pill taken about twelve o'clock, either pills composed of ext. col. comp. and extract of hyoscyamus; or pilul. rhei comp., or pilul. cambogiæ; or, if these should not be active enough, a dessertspoonful of conf. sennæ with or without gr. v. pul. rad. jalapæ. *Liquid laxatives for purging are not allowed in dyspepsia;*\* these may sometimes be necessary, but only as exceptions to the rule. I object not to a lavement every morning; many of my patients not having omitted to use assistance of this kind during many consecutive years, with great benefit; but then it should be remembered that aperients are also occasionally required, lavements emptying only *the lower portion* of the intestinal canal.

Napoleon, who was a martyr to another complaint, when lavements would not relieve, always found laxative effects from taking a composition of milk and yolk of egg, sweetened with sugar. The whole passage relating to the subject, and to so celebrated a man, is worth the perusal:—"Dans son état naturel de santé, la constipation lui était habituelle; c'était chez lui une incommodité de l'enfance qui ne l'avait jamais quitté. Quand elle devenait trop pénible, il avait recours aux bains et aux lavements; parfois il était obligé d'y joindre des boissons adoucissantes, la diète et le bouillon aux herbes. Quelquefois même tout ce régime ne

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\* Broussais said, "Fuge purgantia, tanquam pestem."

suffisait pas; il était forcé de recourir à son remède héroïque. Cette préparation de lait, de jaune d'œuf et de sucre produisait sur lui l'effet d'un purgatif doux qui le soulageait constamment. *C'était le seul remède dont il eût fait usage en sa vie.*"\*

The lower intestines being only emptied by the lavenement, this should be composed of soap and water only, and that as warm as can comfortably be borne, the quantity from a pint and a half to a quart. When it is considered that, quite irrespective of the mass of food which we introduce to the system, the delicate mucous membrane which lines the long intestinal canal is constantly secreting a fluid to shield it from harm; that the liver and the pancreas contribute their share of the accumulation; and that the secretion of the first of these is always of an irritating (particularly if long retained) and often of a rank and offensive character; this alone is sufficient to indicate to those who have common sense, that this, the legitimate *debris* of the constitution, ought, each twenty-four hours, at least, before absorption of it to any extent can take place, to be duly and habitually expelled, or bad breath, offensive perspirations, drowsiness, and still worse evils will arise. *My most healthy patients are those who have habitually two motions daily.* Happy are those who require not "peristaltic persuaders," as Dr. Kitchener† was accustomed to call them; and these are

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\* Examen des Doctrines médicales de M. Broussais, tome iii. p. 304.

† No one can regret more than myself the comparatively

usually persons having light-colored hair, dark-haired people being usually of a costive habit.\* If, however, where little food is taken, the bowels will, of necessity, become oppressed, how much more must injury to the body arise, unless systematically and frequently rescued by nature or by art, when three or four meals a day are superadded! Early rising should be practiced by *all* dyspeptics; the bed should be left in the sum-

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early death of Dr. Kitchener. He was bound to me, indirectly by the ties of consanguinity, and, though an eccentric, was a truly amiable man: he was only forty-eight when cut off.

\* To show the necessity of a daily persevering emptying of the intestinal canal, I may mention a case, related to me by my old friend, the late Dr. Blount, of Hereford, brother-in-law to Dr. Lamb, who, feeling sure (though the bowels of a patient of his were seemingly open enough) that there was some lodgment causing irritation, at last expelled the lodger, to wit, a piece of stringy ham, which the man had eaten six weeks before, and which had got entangled in one of the many folds of the alimentary canal. Friction of the abdomen, and that long continued, in these obstructions of the bowels, should never be neglected: though it is, I believe, little practiced. It is good for medical gentlemen (and this I say expressly) carefully to consult in concert over a case; for, as the late Dr. Merriman, one of the brightest ornaments of the profession, once said to me, "I like to call in our neighbor Dr. Chambers; he has too pure a mind to damage a medical brother by word or deed; and always brings me help in the shape of practical knowledge." In ordinary cases, a physician's treatment of his patient takes its tone from his own constitutional character,—feeble and undecided, or rash and inconsiderate, or, what is far better, the steady middle course.

mer at six, and in the winter at break of day, by those who desire a healthy old age; an hour after which, when some appetite shall have come (as it will always do when once the good habit has been established), the first meal should be taken, and that substantial or otherwise, according to the time allotted for dinner or luncheon, and according also to the work, if any, to be done. If much mental or bodily labor be in prospect, the large meal of the day should not be taken till this shall have been accomplished; in which case a third of the principal daily repast may be had in the shape of a portion of meat at breakfast; and the stomach may in consequence be spared later in the day, *when unable to do much, the nervous and circulating powers having been by that time nearly exhausted.* Those pitiable individuals who rise day by day, and year by year, without occupation, or the prospect of any, will, if wise, take the chief of their nourishment at or before three o'clock. But let me implore those who are condemned, as millions are, to a strictly sedentary life, not only to seek, but to **MAKE**, opportunities for walking: this would be the best kind of exercise, even if it were not the cheapest. They must remember, however, that if they can only walk immediately before dinner, and have become heated much thereby, they must not take this, the principal meal, till they shall have become cool. Dancing, for all of suitable age, would be better even than walking; but the great good which this is calculated to accomplish is nullified by these saltatory movements being performed in contaminated

air and at unreasonable hours; but ventilation\* is at last asserting her rights in the cabin, the cottage, and the palace, and the life-giving oxygen will, in this glorious age, be employed as the Giver of all good things destined that it should be, namely, for the absolutely needful daily and *nightly* revivification of man. But where shall we find a poet who could compose and chant an ode of a sufficiently laudatory character for an entire change of air,—that is, the moving from one place to another for a time as prolonged as possible, once at least annually? The poet-laureate himself could not satisfy me, and, of course, no one else could: so, in plain humble prose, I say, let all those having the power, who are obliged to live in large cities, take a tour, by land or by water, or by both, annually, for as long a time, if men of business, as they can justifiably spare, *to as great distance from home as they have courage to undertake*, and accompanied by those whose lives are dearer to them than their own. Let them escape from a locality where the work of a week elsewhere is often done in a day, thereby defying the doc-

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\* The public are greatly indebted to Mr. Toynbee, the eminent aurist, for his incessant exertions, philanthropically exercised, especially for the benefit of the poor of this metropolis, in introducing among them a *habit* of ventilating their close and confined dwelling-rooms; a fertile source of dyspepsia, consumption, adynamic fever, and other serious maladies, as London physicians well know. None but consumptive, asthmatic persons, and those who have weak lungs, should have a fire in their bedrooms at night; *but these should always have this in cold weather, if possible.*



tor, and laying in a stock of health for the remainder of the year. Traveling *alone* is of little use. But, alas! there are those who cannot command even a single week in twelve months; and of these the greater proportion are medical men, that unappreciated class, who daily run greater risks, a hundred times told, than he who once or so in his life may seek reputation at the cannon's mouth. Dr. Bence Jones well said, in his admirable lecture, October 1, 1849, at St. George's Hospital, on the opening day, we are angels while our patients are ill, and something else when they become well—we, who are conscientious, and honest, and just, and considerate, and Samaritan-like, through the whole of our lives, and dying, rarely, very rarely, leave anything deserving of the name of substance for our widows or our children.\*

It is a rule, too, with some, to talk wildly and at random about the inordinate gains of the curators of the sick: this, too, is idle gossip. In London, the appearance to be kept up (not required of the other

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\* It will be conceded that members of the medical profession succeed *best* in this great Babylon. I have been, during many years, a Director of the excellent Society for the Benefit of the Widows and Orphans of the Medical Men of London and its Vicinity, an institution which almost all the first physicians and surgeons in the metropolis support. Now, will it be believed that the widow of *one in four* of such leading men, with her children (it is found on the experience of years), comes for help to the institution, not having £50 a year, the *minimum* sum, which would disqualify her? *Many are entirely destitute!*

learned professions, *to the members of which I have not yet been able to see in what single respect we are inferior*) swallows up the larger income obtained through there being more people *here* congregated together. In the country, medical men never, or very rarely, receive anything worthy to be called remuneration for the slavery of body and harass of mind that they undergo. Having myself lived long in each locality, I can testify fully, truly, and undeniably of these things. Below will be found an example of the old adage, that "all is not gold that glitters."\*

Before quitting the subject of air without, and air

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\* I called one morning on my neighbor and friend, the late Dr. Chambers, then the first physician in London, some ten years ago, and congratulated him unfeignedly on his being in the act of making a very large fortune; and on his inquiring what I meant, I replied that I had *seen many* patients go to his house that morning. He said, "Listen. You may have seen as many as nine this morning: eight of them begged my advice on some pretext or another; the ninth gave me a fee, which I presented to the gentleman who has just preceded you, who is an honest doctor in distress." I know another London physician, who, during sixteen years, opened his doors every morning, the Sabbath included, to all who might desire his advice; he made a free hospital, as it were, of his house; but at length, having prescribed for many thousand persons gratuitously, and seeing how much his charity was abused, by persons sneaking in who, he knew, were able to compensate him, he laughingly said that he had made up his mind at last (metaphorically, of course) "to carry the hat round," when, as happens after street-performances, all but the really poor and distressed, the maimed and the cripples—fled!

with, exercise, I desire to offer one word of friendly advice to those, and they are many, who can devote but one day in seven to the enjoyment of both of these combined, namely, to be especially moderate\* in the use of such privilege, or they will injure rather than benefit their health, since the constitution will not endure extremes, particularly in this respect.

Having obeyed his physician in all preliminary respects, the patient takes the first in order, but the second most substantial meal of the day. Would that it could be the first in reality ! Whether milk, tea, cocoa, or weak chocolate be the liquid preferred, it will never be swallowed by sane persons scalding hot in temperature, reminding one of the ridiculous custom once the fashion,—for, alas ! there is fashion in physic, as in other things,—to drink after dinner a pint or more of water, as hot as it could be borne, by way of strengthening the stomach ! If meat be necessary, Brother Jonathan's plan of bolting it, for which he suffers grievously in his attacks of dyspepsia, will not be adopted ; but mastication, or minute comminution,†

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\* I have had often, as patients, those who, having only one day in seven for recreation, have been made ill by greatly overtaxing their strength on that day, and doing far too much at once ; not considering that, being all creatures of habit, the free use of their limbs in the open air, *with them*, was the exception, and not the daily rule, and therefore to be only temperately, *because rarely, enjoyed*.

† I am acquainted with a gentleman who lost all his teeth soon after fifty years of age, after which, not troubling himself to masticate with his purchased grinders, he has in-

which will answer the same purpose. Do but *separate well* animal food, and the saliva and the gastric fluid will do the rest; and the peristaltic persuader (should there not have previously been a call to the temple of Cloacina), within the next two or three hours, is then to be dispatched on its special mission. If more exercise can now be obtained, by which walking is always meant, so much the better. If a late dinner should make a luncheon necessary, meat is then never required, be it remembered, at this, which should be merely an apology for a meal, mental and perhaps bodily work having afterward to be done. Whether the dinner be taken at three, or at seven or eight, all the inconsiderate portion of man and woman kind will eat till they can eat no longer; and some will unblushingly say that they have done so, and in good society, too. Let such, if ever dyspeptic, eschew champagne, at least, and indemnify themselves with sherry instead; bread will supply the place of a superabundance of animal food; a moderate quantity of water will supersede beer; and, if ice be at last presented, the unhappy wight who labors under weak digestion will do well to pass it on to his or her neighbor.

The food, when the stomach is treated fairly, and due rest is given to it between each meal, begins, as I believe, to be digested in some strong persons immediately; but even allowing it a brief period for prepa-

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variably divided minutely his meat, and during thirteen years has neither had indigestion nor any other inconvenience, being in rude health, and full of strength.

ration, *two hours, whenever possible, must be spent by every one after dinner in perfect repose.* Even the newspaper is not to be read, unless a short nap be desirable and cannot otherwise be induced. But this entire state of repose will not, and by some *cannot*, always be conceded to the just claims of the stomach, while engaged in its greatest diurnal duty, by toiling, care-worn man! and this, I believe, is one reason why female dyspeptics (owing to their comparative exemption from the worry of business, or the consideration of exciting political and other questions) are more easily curable, as they certainly are, than those of the rougher sex. I have also said that, especially for those who cannot sleep at night, a doze of half an hour is not only allowable, but even necessary. No description of nutriment whatever ought to enter the mouth after a late dinner, excepting, perhaps, black tea, with a small portion of stale bread or biscuit. But to invalids, to amuse the digestive organs till sleep should come, either gruel or sago, or arrow-root, or tapioca (with or without the flavor of brandy as a placebo), for the night, may be taken. Of the *medical* treatment of dyspepsia *this* may be said, that without it the observance of every rule that has been laid down as to diet, etc. will be of no avail; but by attention to it, and that to no great extent, indigestion, however severe and harassing, unless there be real disease, is generally curable—perhaps more certainly than almost any disorder that flesh is heir to. And next to the gratification of seeing a valuable life restored, by what we believe to have been our well-directed exertions, is

the pleasure of comforting a timid valetudinarian by the assurance of the probability of his or her recovery. It is the physician's best fee—his truest *honorarium*; and, although he does not, like the empiric, promise a cure of all complaints to everybody (for this is the line of demarkation between the legitimate sons of *Æsculapius* and the irregular guerrillas of medicine), he yet, by his experience, can so exactly estimate his power as generally to foretell that which may by the sick be confidently relied upon. There is even a *look* in disease, which is recognized by a medical man of experience (often very early, and when invisible to the non-professional eye), and which tells him unmistakably when there is no hope of a cure for his patient. This is indeed the greatest trial which humane practitioners of medicine experience, to know that the smoothing the way to the tomb is all the privilege which they are likely to possess. In a case of this kind two things appear to me to be incumbent upon us: the first, to tell\* the whole truth to the most sensible (sup-

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\* I am aware that the propriety of our interfering in any but medical matters is questioned by some. To such I say that it is not for us to decide whether a death-bed repentance will avail, or, to use the words of the late Rev. Rowland Hill, "whether the Almighty will accept Satan's leavings;" but I hold it to be the bounden duty of a physician, should he see unmistakable symptoms of approaching dissolution, to tell some one his opinion on this point, that, not interfering further, an opportunity be afforded for introducing a minister of religion; and those who may consider this extra-professional and intrusive must look for help elsewhere than from



posed) friend of the invalid; and next, I hold it to be a rule no less sacred, not to torment and distress and harass our patient by tentative subjections, when we are *sure* that we cannot cure him. I say, tell the truth to a friend. Why so? Because the inability to bear the knowledge of his hopeless state is all-but universal, either with Christians or others, such and so close is the clinging of the soul to her earthly tenement. And those of our profession who have lived long and seen much, know that it is so, however much one would wish that the case should be otherwise. I had a most distressing instance in proof of this two or three years ago, which I will briefly mention. A tradesman, living in the Edgeware road, for whom I had been prescribing occasionally, came one morning, and said, "Sir, I am very ill, and believe that I am in danger; you know whether I am, or not; and I am come to ask the favor of you to tell me if my disorder is likely to kill me, for I have a good wife and a bad son, and I wish to settle my affairs. You may tell me the truth, for I can bear to hear it." Distressing though it was (for I had never been asked the ques-

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me. In consumption, for instance, one of the *symptoms* of the malady being the expectation of recovery at a period when the medical adviser knows it to be impossible, then it is that the relations of the patient at least must not be dealt unfairly by, but be told the real truth. In the cases of Catholics at Rome (as I was informed from high authority in that city), after the attendance of a physician upon a patient has been necessary three consecutive times, he is *obliged* to demand spiritual aid. Such is the decree.



tion so pointedly before), I replied, that my opinion was decidedly that he would not recover. (He had cancer of the stomach, not to be mistaken.) "I thank you, sir," he said. "And now, once more, how long do you think I may continue?" This question (as harassing as the other), I answered, by saying, "Some weeks, or even months." I found, however, that though he said he could bear it, he could not; the axe had been laid to the root of the tree, and he lived but a very short time afterward.

Sick persons are generally not so straightforward and open when detailing their symptoms as they ought to be. They should then consider themselves as in the witness-box with a friendly barrister, and wait to be asked questions; and, when the physician *appears* to have finished his inquiry, the patient may add any information which may not have been elicited, and which may be thought to be important. But how preferable is a taciturn to a loquacious invalid! Nothing annoyed Mr. Abernethy so much as this, which led to his method, in one particular case, of spiking the cannon :\* he was

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\* A very talkative lady, who had wearied the temper of Mr. Abernethy, which was at all times impatient of gabble, was told by him, the first moment that he could get a chance of speaking, to be good enough to put out her tongue. "Now, pray, madam," said he, playfully, "*keep it out.*" The hint was taken. He rarely met with his match; but on one occasion he fairly owned that he had. He was sent for to an inn-keeper who had had a quarrel with his wife, and who had scored his face with her nails, so that the poor man was bleeding and much disfigured. Mr. Abernethy considered this an

facetious and humorous, and loved a joke; but he had too generous a heart—as those who knew him best were well convinced—to make personally offensive speeches to women, however angry with them. The late Mr. Heaviside\* on one occasion sadly forgot himself, and was punished accordingly. But who so enduringly patient as the pitying physician, when real danger is present? and who seeks the dark cloud in the sky so soon as he? If he has a sympathizing heart, his feelings are tried every day; if he has not, he possesses not the magnet which belongs to his glorious vocation. But let him carefully avoid that patient whose chosen subject is the abuse and vituperation of

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opportunity not to be lost for admonishing the offender, and said, “Madam, are you not ashamed of yourself to treat your husband thus? the husband, who is the head of all—*your* head, madam, in fact.” “Well, doctor,” fiercely retorted the virago, “and may I not scratch my own head?” Upon this, her friendly adviser, after giving directions for the benefit of the patient, turned upon his heel, and confessed himself beaten for once.

\* Mr. H. had a patient, a very stout lady, who was everlastingly sending for him, and often unnecessarily. One morning the message came, “he was to go immediately.” He regarded it not, finished the business in which he was engaged, went to visit some persons who were really ill, and then obeyed the summons of the morning. The lady was in a towering rage, and said so much in the way of reproach, that the doctor lost *his* temper, and *insisted* upon knowing, without more delay, what was the matter; and upon her saying that she had a bad pain in the small of her back, he asked her where that might be, and was thereupon immediately desired to leave the house, into which he never went again!

him by whom he had been previously attended; for it is useless to say to one of his description that *all* medical men do their best, and, if they fail to relieve, they themselves suffer next only in degree to him whom they would gladly, because it was their interest, have succored. But no, says the vituperant: "he could have relieved me, but he would not." But, above all, let the physician avoid, as he would a pestilence, the *brother*—and the race is not extinct—who has ever been known to say to the once patient of, another, "It was well for you that you came for relief when you did; a few days more under that man's care would have proved your destruction!" Medical men, medical friends, ye who are gentlemen, eat bread and drink water all your lives before you condescend to meet a fellow like this in consultation, whatever be his station,—having first satisfied yourselves that he had thus spoken of any legally qualified man,\* whether physician or surgeon; for one who is fit for *your* society could not, knowingly, rise on the downfall of another; since he would feel that to die happily he must live honestly, and that that, and that alone, would bring him peace at the last.

Although the boa-constrictors of the human race do

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\* My dear master, whom I can never be tired of quoting, was accustomed to say that "if dirt, in any quantity, were thrown upon an angel, *some of it would stick*;" like a vile lie published on the eve of an election (known to be a falsehood by the utterer), *specified early enough to do incalculable mischief, but purposely circulated too late to be contradicted.*

not usually eat hats,\* needles, or, as the veritable boa did, a blanket,† for a change, there is quite enough of voracity chargeable to intellectual, intelligent man, whereby his stomach is everlastingly in trouble.

The pulse must be watched in dyspepsia, so that it

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\* My old friend Mr. Judd, Surgeon-major of the Scotch Fusilier Guards, was once sent for to relieve a man who was said to have eaten a hat. On his arrival, he found a young man, a soldier, exceedingly ill, and in great pain. Mr. J., not believing the hat story, sent for the landlord of the public-house, where the fact was confirmed by the whole staff of the establishment, that the patient had really eaten a hat (cut into pieces and fried in butter) for gold! Under suitable treatment this cormorant recovered; but not immediately. In the Museum at the College of Surgeons is a large bottle full of needles, weighing many ounces, nay, more than a pound, which were swallowed by a woman, who could not have been in her senses. She lived many months afterward, however, and, instead of being emaciated, got fat. *Needles are, nevertheless, not recommended as an article of diet, for this was a case of post hoc, and not propter hoc.*

† See an amusing account in Dickens's "Household Words," giving a History of the Boa-Constrictor in the Regent's Park, which, instead of eating two young rabbits, which had been put into the cage for his supper (downright murder), had, while poking about in the dark, as is supposed, got hold of his blanket, the end of which in the morning (proof positive) was hanging out of his mouth! and the intended "supper" alive and well. It is believed, however, that this patient did not die, but that *his* patients did! It is impossible to mention the name of Dickens without gratefully acknowledging his noble and generous and *constant* appreciation of medical men, the much-enduring, never-tiring, unrequited benefactors of their afflicted fellow-mortals.

be not too full and hard, or too rapid; when near to or above a hundred beats in the minute, all our care is required. It is the storm at sea, and there are breakers ahead. Tonics *then*, as we all know, are out of the question: the commotion must first be allayed. When pain exists, as it usually does in severe dyspepsia, and must be our main guide, eight or ten leeches, and these, perhaps, repeated once or twice, at the scrobiculus cordis, will almost always give relief, whether the cause be congestion or inflammation. The leeches may be followed, should the patient not be able to bear the loss of much blood, by a sinapism the following day, that excellent comparatively modern remedy, which, in the cases of children especially, so often supersedes blisters. When harassing annoying acidity prevails, the tongue being covered with a white coating, no curative means are so efficacious as some mild mercurial, pilul. hydrarg. for instance, in combination with pilul. rhei co., every alternate night, followed the next morning by a Seidlitz powder, or a dose of ol. ricini, or a (*gentle*) old-fashioned black draught; this to be repeated three or four times, interdicting animal food, and giving liquor potassæ, or bicarbonate of potash, with lemon-juice, thrice daily. But what are we to prescribe, says my reader, when mercury cannot be taken, which we know to be the case with some very few persons, who are quite aware of this idiosyncrasy themselves, often to their sorrow; for the medical man (a stranger) who has been called in may possibly have forgotten the golden rule which every one who writes for the sick should have in his mind, and the patient

has thereby suffered, namely, *invariably to ask*, "Is there any drug which has been found to be hurtful to your constitution, the introduction of which your stomach has resented?" The answer will sometimes be, mercury\* in any shape or degree, or opium, or rhubarb, or aloes, etc. I know of no medicine, when it is desired to act upon the liver and where mercury cannot be tolerated, so efficacious as a combination of nitric and muriatic acid with taraxacum, in large doses; but the following mixture of M. Lugol is also good: —Iodinii, gr.  $\frac{3}{4}$ ; hydriod. potassæ, gr. iss.; decocti taraxaci, Oss. Fiat mist. One-fourth part of this mixture

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\* One of the most annoying cases that ever occurred to me was the following. I was sent for to a hotel, to an American lady, the wife of a barrister, who was ill from having neglected her bowels. While writing my prescription, I ascertained that she could not take even one grain of calomel, and I therefore promised that no mercury should enter into the composition of my remedy. The lady was *enceinte*. In the night I was roused from my slumber to go to the assistance of this patient, who had been afflicted with violent tormina, sickness, etc. An anodyne gave relief; and on calling upon the chemist to order something more, he said, "Sir, while I made up the medicine, yesterday, the gentleman waited; and when I took down *the blue pill*, he started!" And so did I! and requested to see my prescription (in order to take it away), which contained ℞ij. of ext. coloc. co. and ℞j. ext. hyoscyami *only*, written sufficiently well. . . . It was just a stupid mistake. It behooved me, however, to clear myself with the husband; but the chemist never forgave me for not screening him at my own cost; though I made the lawyer hold his tongue (no easy matter); for this careless compounder of medicine had seven children.

may be taken at first daily in divided doses, increasing it to three-fourths; at the same time eight or ten grs. of pilul. rhei comp. in pilulas xij., two on alternate nights, to be assisted off the next day or not, as may be required. I do not venture, where opium cannot be borne,—a most unfortunate peculiarity, for it is the second-best medicine, next to mercury, if not the best of all that we have,—to prescribe morphia, but find hyoscyamus or conium tolerable substitutes. Rhubarb and aloes will not be badly represented by jalap, senna, or castor oil.

Till acidity be removed, tonics and sedatives will not furnish their large share in the cure of indigestion. The following mixture is an excellent one:—Potassæ bicarb., ℥iss.; potassæ nitratis, ℥ij.; infusi diosmæ, ℥xv.; tinct. hyoscyami, ℥ij. Fiat mist. Quarum capiat cyath. vinarium ter quotidie. Some cannot take potash who will be benefited by soda or magnesia, or sesquicarbonate of ammonia. When the tongue (the sure index of the condition of the stomach—for even when dumb it speaketh) is white, flabby, and the impressions of the teeth remain on it, saline food, porter, and wine, and iron, are indicated; and of the preparations of this metal I prefer the tinct. ferri sesquichloridi, especially when one of the gentle sex is my patient (from ℥xv. to xxx. thrice daily, in a wineglass of weak cinnamon-water); or the following mixture:—Acidi sulph. dil. ℥j.; infusi chirayitæ vel gentianæ comp., ℥vij.; tinct. aurant. ℥ss. M. Sumat coch. tria ampla ter quotidie; or, if the stomach be irritable, and has undergone much wear and tear, and constant sick-



ness prevails, hydrocyanic acid may be tried three or four times a day;\* from three to five minims, in mint or other distilled water, for a dose; but till I had had more experience with a better medicine than any of these, *in certain suitable cases*,—for each, differing so much as we do in constitution, must be treated on its own merits,—I was accustomed to add to every dose of the above acid from one-sixth to one-eighth of a grain of hydrochloride of morphia. The preparation which I have alluded to is the oxide of silver,† the best and safest, because the most sure, medicine that we have in most, I do not say in all, cases of dyspepsia. Having not only introduced but prescribed it more frequently than any other living physician, once daily,

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\* In a case of incessant vomiting, the stomach refusing anything, Dr. Alison entirely nourished a patient by lavements of broth, yolk of eggs, port wine, etc., during forty days, who then recovered. I had myself a successful case so treated, where, during sixteen days, nothing could be retained in the shape of nourishment *per vias naturales*.

† The mode of its preparation, which contains one atom of our second-best metal, with one of our most noble gas (oxygen), will be found *not in the London*, but in the “Dublin Pharmacopœia.” This oxide is incompatible with calomel—or conserve of any kind. I have invariably prescribed it, as I have said in my “Practical Remarks,”\* in a fluid form, with a diluted mixture of acacia; if in powder, in combination with pulv. acaciæ, and a small quantity of pulv. glycyrrhizæ; or if in pills, *cum micâ panis*.

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\* Practical Remarks on some Exhausting Diseases, more especially belonging to Women. Second edition. Churchill.

generally much oftener, in various ailments during the last twenty years (since July, 1841), and watched its effects with entire fidelity, aided by very many enthusiastic friends, any objection to its use, therefore, from any quarter whatever, passes by me as wind and vapor, against the deep conviction of positive indubitable experience. *Time will settle the question; and I desire no other arbitrator.\** Every observing medical man must have valuable information to communicate, which, neglecting to record, is lost to his brethren forever; for myself, not writing for pelf, though loving employment, it is my intention, so long as I may live, to treasure up, and chronicle from time to time, any practical points that I may have the good fortune to discern.

The oxide of silver is a tonic and a sedative of the first class, in dyspepsia and diarrhœa, especially with children; it is, moreover, the best astringent that I know in every kind of slow or chronic hemorrhage, as I have reported; *and I shall do this again and again, so long as I may live*; for I have never said or written a word to my medical brethren, respecting the pre-eminent qualities of this admirable medicine, that I could

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\* If I am asked, which I have been many, many times,—and a very fair question it is,—What are the bad effects, if any, arising from the employment of this medicine? I reply, really *none, if prescribed properly*, and for a reasonable length of time. I never had but one case among thousands where I had any doubt of its agreeing; I NEVER SAW THE SKIN AFFECTED; but *if it should be, I desire here to say, once for all, that the gaucherie of the doctor alone will have been the cause, now that the medicine is so well understood.*

not entirely justify; and whether they take it up generally or not, is of no consequence to me individually, so long as I feel that I have presented to them, with the purest intentions, a faithful report of my very large experience; but, as the *Times* of October 23, 1851, says (in one of its grand sledge-hammer leading articles, which so often extort our admiration, whether we agree with the sentiments or not), "Truth, in its simplicity, is too powerful a medicine for the great bulk of mankind, the mere creature of a thousand prejudices and habits." My dear friend and adviser, the late Dr. James Johnson, before he became satisfied of the superiority of the oxide, was accustomed to give, as he told me, from half a grain upward of the *nitrate of silver even* (a very much stronger preparation), with the happiest effects, twice a day, for three months together. He it was to whom I submitted my "Practical Remarks," and who urged me to publish them, saying that *he* could testify to their truth. I do not prescribe more than two months at one time. When dyspepsia is very obstinate, as it occasionally is, I suspect disease of the kidneys. Mr. Abernethy was accustomed to say to us (after relating a case which did not end as he wished), "The patient died, gentlemen, *but he ought to have recovered under the treatment.*" This my excellent master was dotingly beloved by his pupils; but by some, who knew him not, he was considered unfeeling; he *was* irritable, and (like another great surgeon,\* now living—another, to whose words

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\* Sir B. C. Brodie.


of wisdom I had the privilege in early youth to listen) would not *allow* his patients (men or women) to waste his time unnecessarily; but he had a generous affectionate heart; he who has given a hundred pounds at once to the distressed young widow of a medical man, with a family of infants, as he has done, to my knowledge,—he who, after a long gratuitous attendance on a very poor lady, who pined in vain for sea-air to perfect her recovery, had abundant means placed at her disposal by this her generous and pitying surgeon,—by him who might have now and then been *brusque*, but the rough outside had a brilliant diamond, a *Kohinoor* of sympathy for real suffering, *set within*.

While it is most important to obtain knowledge of all the means by which we can remedy disordered states of the stomach, liver, and other of the organs of digestion, perhaps it is even more important to give to the public some knowledge of the means by which such disorders may be altogether prevented by strict attention to diet, the best periods for meals, and the quantities of the various kinds of food which we ought to take. Strict attention to these points verifies what has been before asserted, that by such vigilance as to the quality and quantity of food we may altogether prevent most of the evils of indigestion. By obtaining some knowledge of the actions of our stomach, and of the food which best agrees with it, many diseases may be averted altogether. Personal experience is of much importance on this point; for although general rules can be laid down for the management of the stomach, yet experience tells us that no two of these organs are

exactly similar, and that the same system of diet is not applicable to all. Personal experience must be called in to aid in the treatment of all diseases, but most essentially so in the case of the stomach. We must learn the kinds of food which best agree with each individual patient, because the most important conclusion on the treatment of indigestion and other morbid affections may be obtained by the individual examination of every patient. The most unobservant person must know what articles disagree with him, and every information of this kind will go far to assist in the selection of remedies for disease. Mere abstinence from certain things will often remedy derangements of health when too much or too rich food has been continued, even after the organ so supplied has repeatedly afforded warnings of approaching disorder. Nature herself often gives notice of overindulgence, by destroying appetite. Children take the warning and refuse food altogether: but it is so common a notion that we cannot get on without regular meals, that many adults aggravate stomach and liver derangements by persisting in taking food of some sort, but which affords no nourishment at all, because it cannot be digested, and thus acts as any other extraneous substance, by increasing the already deranged powers of the organ. We may rest assured that mischief rarely happens in disease from want of food, although much mischief is often caused by the ignorant in pressing it against the warnings of nature in depriving us of any desire for it. In the incipient stage of many diseases, abstinence at first, and then a very strict

attention to judicious nourishment, will alone cure them.

However, we should be careful not to overlook any real approach of disease; for we may thus neglect symptoms of important derangements easily removed in their early stages, but often very obstinate if allowed to increase by our disregard of them, and many valuable lives are annually sacrificed by the non-observance of early symptoms of disease. Many medical men think that some knowledge of disease ought to be acquired by everybody. Had I not been in the profession, I think I should not have been satisfied without obtaining some knowledge of disease and the best means of treating it in accordance with former experience. Probably the time will come when some general principles of health and disease will form one of the subjects of an advanced state of education. Much good would be done if in early adult age we acquired such acquaintance with common diseases and their antecedents as to be able to suppress them in their primary stages, by abstinence, etc., or, by the knowledge we have acquired of their nature, to call in the aid of a medical friend at the very beginning of any serious disorder. There can be no doubt that some physiological teaching would be beneficial in several points of view. By physiology we mean a knowledge of the structure and mode of action of our various organs. Most people know a little on the subject; they have general ideas of the use of the skeleton, that the various bones are moved by muscular power, etc. So great is the importance of some knowledge of the means of retaining our





health and vigor, and it is a growing opinion that in the higher schools the general principles of physiology should be taught, on the ground that such knowledge would sometimes enable us to prevent disease. Healthy blood is essential to our welfare: blood is the product of the ordinary actions of the organs of digestion and respiration: we cannot, therefore, be in good health unless these organs do their work well. Some knowledge of physiology will better enable us to guard against derangements in our digestive organs. The teaching of physiology in our highest schools and colleges has been strongly advocated, and such knowledge would be of greater value to happiness than much of that which is learned in such institutions. To teach every one how best to take care of his health would be the primary result of such knowledge, and it would open the mind to a new variety of facts most essential to our happiness. The good to the community that would result from making physiology, and some knowledge of the animal frame, a part of general education, is much greater than would appear from a cursory and superficial view of the subject. Perhaps there is no department of knowledge which opens and enlarges the mind so much as acquaintance with the structure and functions of animal and vegetable life. What can give us knowledge of a deeper and more important kind than animal life? And, with all the drawbacks and objections to the occupation of a medical practitioner, the very elevated kind of knowledge, and the grand views which the subject presents to the mind, are sufficient compensation for the very disagreeable appendants of

his profession. Who, in the pursuits of life, have such an opportunity of appreciating the grandeur of the power which has created the mental and moral faculties of man, and his capability of enlarging those powers through life? There is no greater mistake than the inference, drawn by superficial observers, that the study of physiological knowledge renders men skeptics, and that such inquiries have the effect of destroying the religion which has been acquired in early life by example and tuition. Among the effects of such knowledge of the creation as is acquired by researches into the structure and living power of vegetable and animal life, there is a vulgar conclusion of an irreligious effect on the character of the student, than which nothing can be more false. If there is any one kind of study more influential than another in elevating our conceptions of the great Author and Giver of life and mind, it is that of the structure and functions of the human frame, and specially of the mental and moral powers with which the human soul has been endowed.

In corroboration of the opinion that some medical knowledge is desirable in education, I have copied the following from the pages of the "British Medical Journal" of November 7, 1868, from an excellent paper on the subject read at Oxford by J. H. Bridges, M.D.

"That physiological truth should be in one way or other incorporated into our educational system is a conviction which is rapidly becoming general. It has even penetrated into the venerable seat of learning in which we are now assembled. Yet, if it were proposed to teach physiology in our national schools, the

proposition would be met with disregard or ridicule; and, without discussing whether the ridiculè would be rational, I content myself with remarking that this proposal is not what I am now advocating. I am recommending merely that a list of certain very elementary sanitary truths should be inculcated by all certified government teachers on children above ten years of age, with the same universality and strictness that we teach the alphabet or multiplication-table, and that the government system of inspection should provide for this being efficiently done."

If the laws of life formed a part of education, if such knowledge could be more generally acquired, its influence would have the effect of increasing health and diminishing disease; our children would be managed, as regards health, very much better than they now are, and a diminution of disease would be the result, more especially that class of diseases known as hereditary. Health alone, as one of the most important objects of life, ought to be a sufficient inducement to all thoughtful persons; but it would be easy to show that knowledge of the structure and working of the various organs of the animal body would be useful in almost all pursuits and occupations of life. The structure of our various organs has been suggestive of instruments of a somewhat similar adaptation in many departments of life. There are contrivances in the animal frame which give hints to architects, engineers, etc. To the artist some knowledge of the structure of many of our organs would enable him to give the most correct drawing of the human form, and prevent some of the

caricatures and blunders we too often witness. It is not a little remarkable that we should be taught grammar, mathematics, languages, history, etc., but what is to all the most important knowledge—that of ourselves—is left to the chance of being picked up, as it too often is, by very bitter experience. Some knowledge of physiology would enable us to prevent many of the evils which beset us in our passage through the world. Some of the disorders and diseases into which we fall in our ignorance might have been altogether prevented by a little knowledge of the structure and functions of our own body,—in other words, a knowledge of physiology.

That very large class of diseases known as indigestion, which are referrible to the stomach and its various derangements, and what are called bilious disorders, referrible to the liver, together with torpidity of the bowels, are all more or less caused by ignorance of the actions of the stomach and organs of digestion. No doubt most of these complaints are within our control; and, if we made ourselves acquainted with the process of digestion, the supply of new nutrient particles to the blood, and the vital importance that these supplies should be regular and healthful, we might defy all the various disorders known as indigestion, and other stomach complaints. We can control such disorders, and the tendency to them, by learning how the stomach acts upon our food, and it converts it into materials calculated to restore to the blood other particles to supersede those which, in our ordinary occupations in life, are daily used up by the actions of our various

organs, in thinking, speaking, walking, or other processes connected with our daily life. The marvels performed by our minds and bodies, by our various organs, liver, stomach, heart, etc., and the amount of nutrient matter required to re supply the daily waste caused by the actions of these various organs: when we consider these points, and the enormous variety of the actions of our frame, it is only surprising that our organs of nutrition can go on for so many years to restore new parts for those worn away by our daily business in life. It is, of course, impossible to calculate how long the existing condition of our organs and our blood would continue to act without fresh supplies; but the daily demands made by our stomach for fresh materials to re-supply the heart and blood-vessels with new particles of blood to replace those constantly used up, enable us to form some conception of the large amount of new materials daily required in the circulation of the blood. If the stomach and digestive organs do not perform their functions of separating from our food those particles which are calculated to afford elements that can be converted into blood, we lose our power of action; debility and various other consequences follow, and, unless we can restore the process of digestion, we may fall into various conditions of bad health, and perhaps the establishment of diseases fatal to our existence. Thus, many of the most important of diseases may commence with indigestion.

It will not be superfluous to conclude with a few more remarks on our daily supplies of food, the due

quantity and quality of what we administer to our stomach, for the performance of the most important of our animal powers, the circulation of the blood ; and, even at the risk of a little repetition, I shall make a few more remarks on this subject. The number of our meals, and the daily periods of taking them, are worthy of attention ; perhaps the most generally adopted system is three meals per diem. Breakfast, luncheon, and dinner are better than breakfast, dinner, tea, and supper. Some do well on two good meals a day, breakfast and dinner. Those who can wait for their food an hour or two after leaving their bed in the morning, and can make a hearty meal with meat or fish, may do well with a second toward evening. When we make a substantial meal about nine or ten o'clock A.M., we may go through the day with a biscuit or other slight refreshment, and dinner in the evening at seven or eight o'clock. It is a good proof of sound digestive organs when we can make a hearty breakfast ; and it is always desirable that animal food should form part of it when only one other substantial meal is taken. The quantity of animal food to be taken daily must vary much in different persons. We have known many very healthy persons whose consumption of cooked animal food has not exceeded eight or ten ounces ; three to four for breakfast, and five to six for dinner.

Tea or coffee for breakfast is preferable to the continental fashion of wine ; even the small quantity of alcohol in light wines is objectionable so early in the day. After breakfast, five, six, or even eight hours may be



spent in the open air with great advantage; for we cannot enjoy good health if we spend much of this part of our lives in sedentary pursuits. Occupations or pursuits which oblige us to be out in the air much daily, are most to be desired, and we may observe, even in large cities, that those whose business obliges them to be very much out of doors enjoy infinitely better health than those who are in shops or offices the whole day. Inhabitants of country places will not have perfect health if they shut themselves up in their houses the greater part of the day; mere residence in a healthy country place is not sufficient for good health without considerable exercise in the open air. The daily amount of exercise can only be arranged by personal experience; but no day should pass away without some, and, when this has become a habit, nothing can be more irksome than to be kept within-doors a whole day. Weather itself is seldom so bad as to oblige us altogether to abstain from a walk, and it is wise not to be dismayed even by some amount of cold or wet. There is no truer maxim in relation to good digestion, and consequently to general health, than that we cannot spend too much time in the open air. To obtain sound and good digestion, which can only result from a good condition of the stomach and digestive organs, we must not keep the house during the day. As examples of this fact, look at the coachmen and others equally obliged as it were to live in the open air, even of London and other large places, and compare their healthy and ruddy complexions with the

pale and cadaverous appearance of those who spend the whole day in shops or offices.

One other important subject yet remains to be considered,—namely, the great abuse of tobacco in these modern times. I am decidedly of opinion that cigar-smoking, in an age where it seems to be practiced, by many, all day, and by some even during a part of the night, *is a fertile source of ruin to the stomach*. The taking of snuff, I believe, may safely be indulged in, as a general rule, after dinner; but there are many who habituate themselves to its use from the first hour of the day, while others, it is said, busily occupy themselves with the powder of the fragrant weed even when in bed, at a time when all rational persons are seeking that repose which all our organs require. Snuffing, however, is by no means so injurious to the digestive functions as the excessive practice of smoking,\* that remarkable vice of the present day!

And now, at length, the bow must be made, though very much is yet striving for utterance; but hoping, *Deo volente*, for more of such leave-takings, I shall soon begin to again hoard information for the youthful and the teachable, especially for those of my own noble profession. Some may think that there is a chasm in the course of my description, inasmuch as I have not touched at all upon some delicate subjects which influence both sexes far more than those we have made so

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\* While on the subject, I may mention, however, that a cigar or pipe smoked immediately after rising in the morning will insure, with many, a visit to the temple of Clouacina.

prominent; but these I considered to be matters for personal friendly inquiry, and not for the prying, prurient eye of the idle and the depraved, to whose taste it is, in the present age, too much the custom to pander. For myself, I trust I may say, with Sir Walter Scott, that I have never knowingly written a line that I could not look upon with comfort and satisfaction in old age,—seeing that my medal of self-selected decoration, though only of silver, has around it the ever-present glorious halo of unalloyed and imperishable TRUTH.

THE END.









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